Entertainment for the Adventurous Lesbian

ON OUR BACKS

Spring 1987

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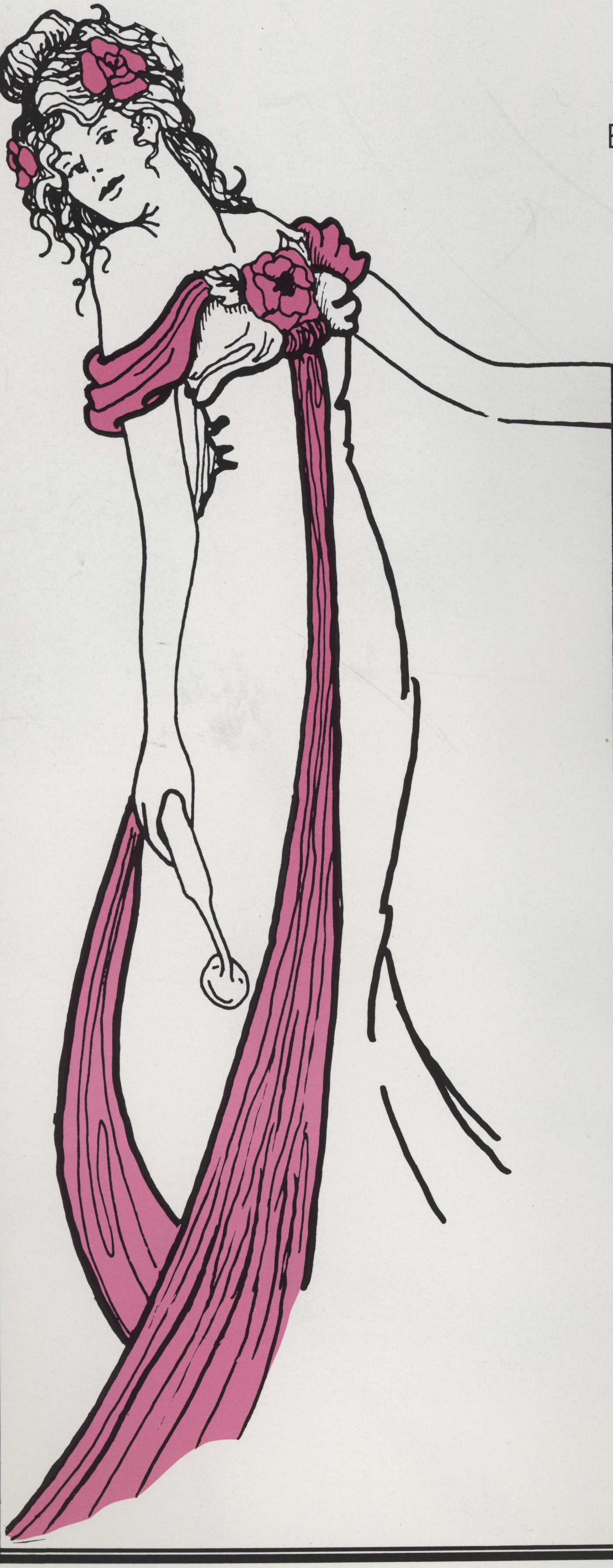

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Vol. 3, No. 4
ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE ADVENTUROUS LESBIAN
Spring, 1987

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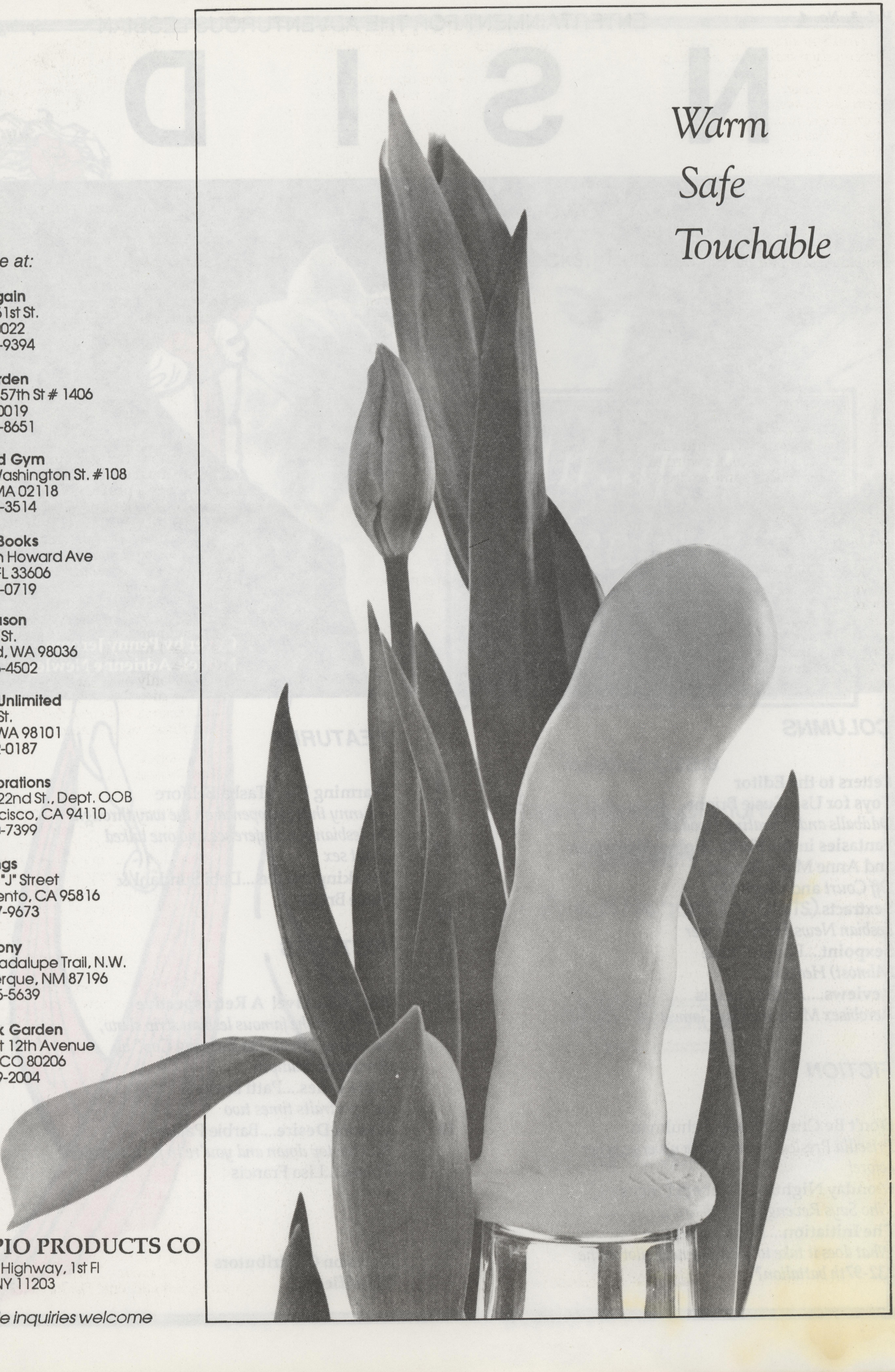

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Letters

Dear Readers,

Thanks to all of you who have generously responded to our call to sponsor a free subscription to a lesbian prisoner. We have requests from gay women in prison from all over the country. At this writing, there are 21 prisoners who would dearly love one of you to send $15 earmarked for a prisoner subscription. -- Susie Sexpert

"Detention," from your Fall 86 issue, was so hot, I'm afraid to go outside lest I melt the snow peaks. Celibacy in exile finally has some juicy relief. Bless the wise lesbian who broke export laws restricting pornography to bring me this pleasure. You have my unreserved admiration.

Rachel Vennirs
Katmandu, Nepal

My lover and I have had five wonderful years filled with fun and fantasy. We look forward to your mag with the same excitement attributed to a child in a candy store. It's refreshing and stimulating to know there are other women out there who enjoy womanloving as much as we do.

My heart goes out to those who have closed their minds and legs to incredible opportunities for exciting, creative sex, because of their inability to cope with the published fantasies or photos of women for women. I have come to believe that some of our numbers have completely forgotten what lesbianism is *all* about, or for that matter, feminism, and freedom of expression.

I for one see no reference to men or their problems in your publication. What a relief!

Darlene and Lillian
Maryland

Albuquerque is a censorship wasteland --no women's outlet for *On Our Backs.*

I am the young optimistic dyke daughter of a beautiful but guilty catholic schoolgirl. I wish to work on my inheritance of catholic sexual uptightness, and *On Our Backs* makes this task of discovering my sexual dyke-passion the toughest job I'll ever love.

Bless your hearts.

Cynthia
Albuquerque

I never thought I'd see the day with I learned how to fistfuck from a magazine article, but I have to hand it to you this time.

Why are lesbians so secretive about fisting? I asked a number of my friends if it was part of their sex life and they all admitted to either fantasizing or doing it --after several minutes of embarrassment.

I'd be very interested in seeing just how many lesbians enjoy fucking with their hands and if it's as widespread as my little clique would indicate.

Gerri Lake
Hollywood, CA

You've made my world go round with "Tennesee" by Pat Williams in your Winter 87 issue. Talk about the ultimate expression of obsession in its purest form.

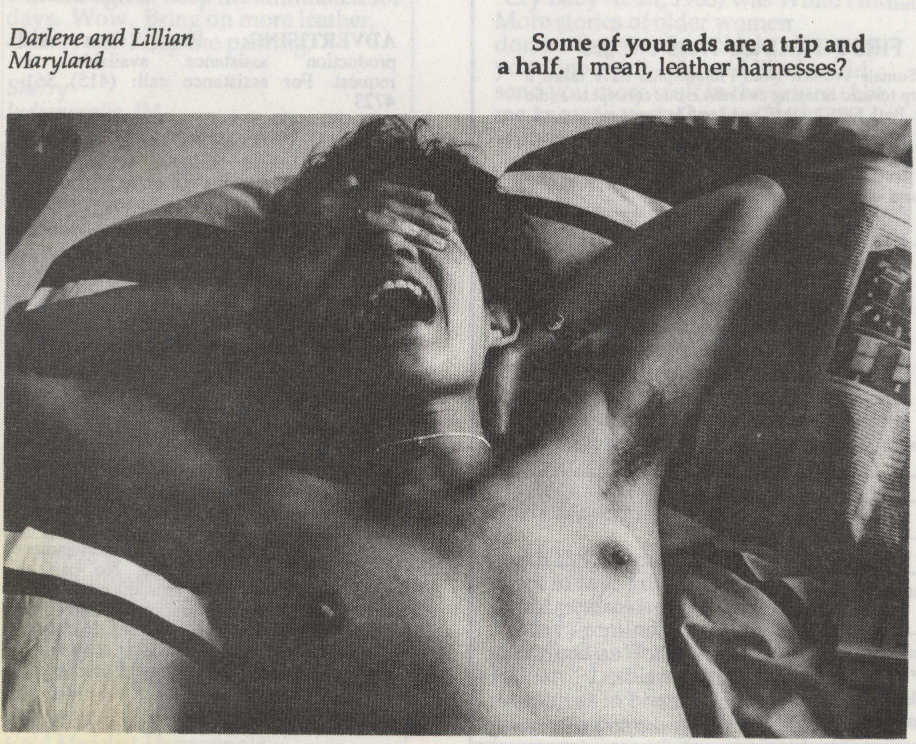
The character "Rohn" was real as far as I'm concerned. If everyone were more like "her" (not male or female, black or white, crazy or sane), wouldn't this world be a better place?

Jan Digby
Boston, MA

Some of your ads are a trip and a half. I mean, leather harnesses? Cunt rings? Pubic hair sculpture? Dildoes the size of a horse's hind leg? They're almost as juicy as some of those seamy sex stories you publish.

Oh, don't mind me. I'm just a lone dyke trapped in Beaumont, Texas, a town not exactly sympathetic to lesbian rights. Whenever your magazine arrives, I have my own little lesbian oasis in the middle of a het desert.

Courtney O'Neale
Beaumont, TX



Gon Buurman

I discovered your publication in the most unlikely place -- my sociology's professor's office, under a stack of papers I had to grade. Apparently he is doing a study on "deviant sex behavior." God knows what his conclusions will be after he read your last issue, particularly "Tennessee" by Pat Williams. I sneaked the issue home and read it from cover to cover, making copious mental notes for further sociological studies I may do on my own in the future.

My only question is, where do you meet a nice, Southern hermaphrodite who knows how to ride? Further investigations are needed....

Ellen Phelan
New Orleans, LA

It is snowing up here; my windows are frosty and the roof is creaking and cracking. Brrr, where did I put my silver fox fur hat and matching foxy wool mittens? And where are my new leg warmers, the ones with orange and green stripes and the little bow ties on the side?.... Oops, now you know I'm really a femme, no matter what else I might write. Oh well, I guess that's okay, so long as Susie Sexpert doesn't come after me with a new dildo - a 12-incher with spikes and bruising black leather straps. I could take it but only after first consulting my doctor, Doctor Feminine Protections, M.D.

Thank you for existing; you make me feel more excited in my lesbianism, and prouder of "IT" as well. I'm so happy I found you.

I've been collecting every one of your issues, carefully stacking them on the brass coffee table in my living room, at the foot of a flute glass (Bohemia fine crystal) which I keep filled with fresh water and daily cut roses. (I'm a very neat femme.) Keeping your magazine literary company are my leather bound copies of Dickens' *The Pickwick*

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ON OUR BACKS is published quarterly by Blush Entertainment Group, 526 Castro, San Francisco, CA 94114. Subscriptions are $15/yr USA; $20/yr Canada (first-class only); $26/yr outside USA (air-mail only). Application to mail at second-class postage rates is pending at San Francisco, CA. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to ON OUR BACKS, 526 Castro, San Francisco, CA 94114.

ADVERTISING: Rate sheet and production assistance available on request. For assistance call: (415) 861-4723

RETAIL OUTLETS: Terms are 40% discount, freight pre-paid, consignment, and return of mastheads of unsold copies for credit. Minimum order ten copies. Send order to: 526 Castro, San Francisco, CA 94114.

SUBMISSIONS: Photographers' and writers' guidelines available upon request with SASE. We are not responsible for unsolicited materials sent without SASE. Allow 6-8 weeks for response.

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Printed in USA by Alonzo Printing and Somerset Press. Desktop Publishing by Blush Entertainment Group.

Letters

Papers and Toynbee's *A Study of History*. Several times already, new girlfriends have come to visit me and, upon seeing my coffee table and the books that are on it, have exclaimed, "You read that stuff!?"

"Oh, yes," I've always replied, cool as can be. "I love classical humor and history and stuff. Don't you?"

Kat
Toronto, Canada

I dearly love *On Our Backs*. As I am in a situation where I can't subscribe (I still live with my mom) I have to depend upon my lover for access to *On Our Backs*. I love it.

Please, more cunt pictures! A lovely spread is yummy!

Don't stop!

Darla
Dearborn, MI

I've been reading your publication for over a year and fully enjoy it. I love the prose and poetry and editorials. However, I personally would enjoy seeing more editorials on mental and physical health. Also, I would like to see more pictorial spreads that weren't so blatantly dominant/passive; e.g., leather mamas or femmes. I think that's not as real or exciting as the more honest depiction of Lesbian as androgynous: women with women who play no definite, obvious roles.

But that's *my* opinion.

Barbara Klar
New York, NY

I've just bought my first issue and page 2 with the breasts in harness was enough to keep me stimulated for days. Wow. Bring on more leather, chains, etc. Keep me panting.

Sherry
Indianapolis, IN

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many women who have written me since my victory at Gay Games II in Physique. My purpose in performing at Gay Games was not to win (although that was nice) but to bring the sport I love into focus in the Lesbian Community. I wanted to share my knowledge and encourage more lesbians into the sport of competitive body building. It was my pleasure to perform and I thank you all for your support.

I would also like to thank *On Our Backs* for including me in their coverage of Gay Games II. Any correspondence can be directed to me in care of Gold's Gym, 360 Hampton Street, Venice, CA 90291.

See you at Gay Games III 1990 Vancouver, Canada!

Val Streit
Gold Medalist Heavyweight

My lover and I look forward to your mag with the same excitement attributed to a child in a candy store. It's refreshing and stimulating to know there are other women out there who enjoy womonloving as much as we do.

We have had five wonderful years filled with fun and fantasy, and I know we'll have many more.

My heart goes out to those who have closed their minds and legs to incredible opportunities for exciting, creative sex, because of their inability to cope with the published fantasies or photos of women for women. I have come to believe that some of our numbers have completely forgotten what lesbianism is all about, or for that matter, feminism and freedom of expression.

I for one see no reference to men or their problems in your publication. It's about time.

Darlene & Lillian
Maryland

I'm a Third World girl who likes her action a little on the rough side. Though I'm 37 years old, 5'4," 133 lbs., and 35-26-36, I've been called a Beauty Queen in my day.

I've been collecting lesbian erotic books, magazines for some 20 years-- I knew early on what I wanted in life. Enclosed are some photos from a lesbian magazine called *Seize*. It had around 12 issues and was out from 1967 to 1969. It was the first truly lesbian photo magazine and from the copies I've sent you, you'll agree the best. These photos were in the day before "X" rated; note the passion and hunger in the eyes of the models. Each issue was like that-- Hunger!

Your magazine is hot. The story "Cry Baby" (Fall, 1985) was White Hot! More stories of older women dominating younger chicks. Keep up your fine work-- if you'd like I could send you more stuff in the future. Let me know in your "Letters" page and I will.

Your bitch in heat,
Mimi Y.

OK, Mimi, you have a lot of nerve not sending us a return address along with your outrageous package. Yes, we'd like to see more of Seize and any other lesbian porn from the past-- when we get enough quality material, we'll do a story on the subject. To Mimi and other readers who have vintage lesbian erotica, please send us samples and a SASE for our reply. We can't keep meeting like this!
Susie Sexpert

All right, ladies, there is something I want to say. I do not want to read about penises in your magazine!

May I remind you that you are self-described as "for the adventurous lesbian." Lesbian as in woman; woman as in breasts, clitoris, vagina, anus-- no penis anywhere! Call it "an hermerotic story" if you wish, but in "Tennessee" (Winter 87) , the story clearly says, [Rohn] "was not a woman nor a man."

I want to read about women in *On Our Backs*. Leave the penises for the straight world, OK?

Carol Sundahl
Seattle, WA

I was lucky enough to be able to see the movie *Desert Hearts* over the weekend. The movie never made it to Harrisburg, but Matrix, the Gay and Lesbian Student Organization of Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, showed it this past Saturday night. I was really impressed. I would like to encourage the producers to make more movies in the same genre, and assure them that there *is* an audience for such movies.

I also want to thank you at *On Our Backs* for your article on this movie-- without it I would never have heard of it. And I'd like to add that your Summer '86 issue was FANTASTIC! Keep up the good work.

Chris Weidman
Middletown, PA

I've been getting your mag since it first came out and I'm glad there is finally an alternative for lesbians.

I've been turned on by quite a few of your short stories, but "Tennessee" really took the cake. Pat Williams is a better writer than quite a few of the other authors who have contributed to your publication. If I knew I could count on a story of that quality in every issue I'd never miss one, ever!

I just heard on the Oprah Winfrey Show that studies now fairly conclusively prove that deep kissing *and* oral/genital sex DO NOT transmit AIDS! The woman who gave this information worked for the Kinsey Institute. I did not get her name.

I'm sorry to end this letter with a chauvinist request, but I just can't refrain from asking you to publish more pictures of very pretty fems who are *not* depicted in S/M scenes.

Angela Brown
Connecticut

Angela, see our Sextracts feature on AIDS and safe sex for lesbians on page 12. French kissing and cunnilingus are definitely safer than many other sexual activities, but until the medical community can prove conclusively that they are both safe sex practices under any circumstances, you are not going to get a solid guarantee.

Toys for Us

ODD BALLS

Susie Bright

Susie Sexpert Reports:

There's no question that I've been a snob about sex toys. At the end of a long day at Good Vibrations, my vibrator alma mater, I would greet the last customers with some curt advice. "If you have a Hitachi magic wand in one hand, and a silicone dildo in the other, what else do you need?"

I tended to be disdainful of more picky shoppers. "All women are the same in the try-out room", I thought as I guided them to the store's multi-use bathroom, and pointed out our two most popular models plugged into the wall.

But the truth is, I've always been curious myself to try every new toy that comes off the assembly line. Along the way I've had a few pleasures that weren't exactly vibrators and yet didn't qualify as dildos either. They're usually the strangest looking toys in the store, and unless you're able to visit *Good Vibrations* in San Francisco or *Eve's Garden* in New York, you'll be hard pressed to find a sales clerk who knows how they work. Some of these items were developed by the manufacturer with a heterosexual couple in mind, but a clever girl can put her mind to it and quickly figure out how to "bring out" the straightest product.

Perhaps the most popular request from veteran vibrator users is that they wish there was something available that would free up their hands from holding the vibrator in place all the time. True, you can clench it between your thighs, but then you can't fuck. It ties in with the "mechanical" feeling some people complain about when using sex toys. Often you can feel like part of a medical team trying to hold everything in place. Ideally, we want spontaneity and smooth transitions so we can concentrate on our feelings instead of whether it's possible to hold the lubricant between our toes while we gallantly strap on the dildo harness. I have a funny photograph of myself at an orgy pressing a dildo into my friend's cunt with my foot so that I could operate a vibrator in my left hand and penetrate her anally with my right. It actually worked very well, but I can think of other awkward times when I felt like tearing out all the electrical cords and giving up.

There are two types of toys that are designed to give No-Hands-Needed clitoral stimulation. One is called the *Hearthrob*, which is a little vibrating valentine suspended in the middle of a pseudo-garter belt. This reminds me of the thing my mother gave me along with a box of Kotex at the onset of my first period. The strap is just a piece of cotton covered elastic, and out of the valentine is a slim cord that attaches to a battery pack. (I wish these things were remote control, or better yet , voice activiated.) You strap on the vibrating heart so that it sits right over your vulva, in a spot where you would enjoy a slight buzz.

One alternative is to just slip on the *Hearthrob* and enjoy all the sensations all to yourself. It's pretty noisy so don't try to go to work and hope that no one will notice. I found that wearing it without pressing it to my clit was just titillating, but not enough to come. But holding it closer to my clit defeated the whole purpose of hands-free activity. I wanted stronger stuff, but the vibrator only runs on two double-A batteries Whether you will enjoy it for masturbation really depends on how much vibration you need to get off, and how direct you like the contact.

There's always the possibility of rubbing up against something besides your own fingers, which is why my favorite position with the *Hearththrob* is to be pressing it up against my lover's body. I suppose strict tribadism afficionados will consider this cheating, but I consider it a piece of valuable technology. Lovers who enjoy humping and bumping will likely enjoy this little diversion.

I still have my grim warnings about battery toys in general--they aren't reliable, or long lasting. But if you love the way they feel, I imagine you'll simply add them to your regular grocery list.

Another no-hands vibrator is a gizmo designed for straight couples that can easily be turned into a lesbian delight. These are the *vibrating cock rings,* which look like thick plastic rings with a pellet shaped vibrator attatched. A battery pack extends off a cheap cord attatched to the ring. Supposedly, Mr. Jones slides the ring over his penis and when he's in the missionary position with Mrs. Jones, the pellet faces her pubic bone and she get stimulation every time he presses into her.

Well, we all know penises are dispensable, but dildoes are a girl's best friend. Snap the cock ring onto your favorite rubber dolly, don your gayest harness, and you too can keep up with the Joneses. Your lover will get the pleasures of the vibrating pellet, and since the ring itself is vibrating too, and the dildo is pressed against your body, you should be able to feel the sensations transmit all the way to your genitals. It won't be as intense for the fucker as it is for the fuckee, but it could be just your idea of heaven! I will wait patiently to hear your feedback.

There is one notorious sex toy that I think should be nominated for the Con of the Century: the infamous *Ben Wa balls*. Their sales in adult stores have thrived for two reasons. Firstly, customers who should know better are swept away by misinformed notions of exotic Oriental sexuality that the gold balls seem to be an emblem of. Whatever myths you've heard about erotic balls that bring women to orgasm by simply wearing them and walking around the room is pure false advertising. Secondly, the women who use them and feel *nothing* are overcome with the traditional feminine embarrassment that something must be wrong with them. It makes me so angry that such products exist which feed off of women's sexual shame.

(continued on page 47)

Chris Rollins

GIOVANNI'S ROOM
Hot Lesbian Books for the Fall & Winter Season!

(215)923-2960 345 South 12th Street Phila., PA 19107 SPRING 1987

FICTION & POETRY

BELINDA by Anne Rice writing as Anne Rampling (Arbor House), 10/86, 352 pp., $17.95 cl. An erotic new novel; the story of a young runaway, Belinda, and her secret world that includes a legendary film star, a young lesbian film director, a seductive hair stylist and a famous illustrator of children's books whom she seduces. A spellbinding novel of seduction and forbidden love.

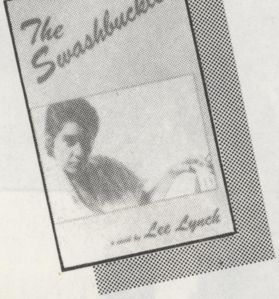
EXIT TO EDEN, by Anne Rampling (Dell), 1985, 308 pp., $3.95 pb. Written pseudonymously by Anne Rice **(The Vampire Lestat, Cry to Heaven)**, this novel centers on a Carribean "club" where people go to have "the sexual vacation of their dreams." This is extremely well-written heterosexual erotica where Lisa, the administrator of the club, dominates.

CHARLEYHORSE, by Cecil Dawkins (Viking/Penguin), due 10/86, 288 pp., $6.95 pb. A lesbian novel set on a ranch in Kansas. Billie and her daughter, Charley, vie for attention and love. When Juna, the new second-grade teacher arrives as a boarder in their home, an alliance between Charley and Juna is formed that enlivens Charley's world.

THE FEMALE MAN, by Joanna Russ (Beacon), 1986 (1975), 224 pp., $7.95 pb. Finally back in print! This is one of the most imporatant works of feminist science fiction ever written. It provides a witty and subversive analysis of the power men hold over women in our society.

THE JOURNEY, by Ann Cameron (Spinsters/Aunt Lute), due 8/86, 314 pp., $7.95 pb. A reprint of a wonderful novel; it follows two women Anne and Sarah as they cross the Canadian wilderness in the late 1800's. A fast-paced story of their love for each other and their adventures as they struggle to survive.

LESBIAN LETTERS, by Christine Heron Stockton (Heron Press), 1986, 137 pp., $8.95 pb. Written in the form of fictional letters to parents, friends, lovers, clergy, etc., this book opens up a wide range of fellings, thoughts, and issues that confront us.



HOME IN YOUR HANDS, by Lee Lynch (Naiad), due fall/86, $7.95 pb. New, short stories by the author of **The Swashbuckler** ($7.95 pb.) and **Toothpick House** ($7.95 pb.). Many of these stories follow up on the lives of characters in these books. She gives us images of dyke sobriety in and out of bars.

LIVING AS A LESBIAN: POETRY, by Cheryl Clarke (Firebrand), 1986, 94 pp., $6.95 pb. Clarke writes variations on the themes of blackness, anger, violence, loss, loneliness, lesbianism, and sex. The images are strong, stunning and hot.

THE SHARPEST EDGE, by S.M. Stirling and Shirley Meier (Signet), 1986, 255 pp., $2.95 pb. New sci-fi set in the distant future after the great holocaust; ShKaira and her dagger-wielding companion Megan, consumate thief and mistress of the arts of illusion, find themselves cast into a life and death struggle over a precarious balance of power in their dominion. Some explicit sex and high adventure.

THE SHELF, by Kay Dick (GMP), 1986, 109 pp., $6.50 pb. "The shelf" is a repository in the coroner's office where Cassandra's letters to Anne had first been lodged. It was all so long ago - but Cass has been unable to forget the passion Anne had roused in her, their brief affair and the mystery that ended it. A powerful, well-written novel.

NON-FICTION

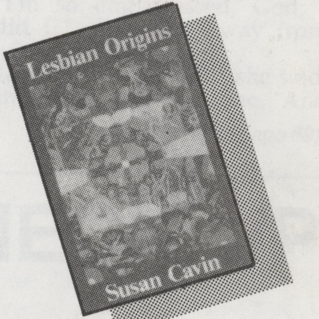
DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR: Cartoons, by Alison Bechdel, (Firebrand), Fall 1986, 80 pp., $6.95 pb., These now famous cartoons about modern lesbian life nudge you from smile through giggle, to raucous guffaw.

PLEASURES OF LOVING: THE EROTIC FANTASIES AND EXPERIENCES OF 52 FRENCH WOMEN, ed. by Francoise Ducout, trans. from French by Nicholas Courtin (St. Martins), 1986, 192pp., $13.95 pb.Taken mostly from "Elle", a popular French women's magazine, these are hterosexual fantasies.

LESBIAN ETIQUETTE: Humorous Essays, by Gail Sausser (Crossing), 1986, 95pp., $6.95pb. A delightful collection about everything from her fantasies as a "baby dike", "De-Dyking the Apartment", "Ways to Dump Your Lover","Seduction in Perspective", and more!

NAMING THE VIOLENCE: SPEAKING OUT ABOUT LESBIAN BATTERING ed. by Kerry Lobel (Seal), 1986,$10.95pb. This book is by and for battered lesbians and those who work to support their empowerment. Lobel alternates personal histories with commentary by counselors, activists, and others.

SEX, POWER AND PLEASURE, by Mariana Valverde (The Women's Press), 1985, 212pp., $8.95 pb. Exploding many traditional notions of sexuality, this book investigates the sexual lives of women today, and unravels the stormy debates around the issues of pornography, censorship, eroticism and power.



LESBIAN ORIGINS, BY Susan Cavin (ISM), 1985, 288pp., $9.00pb. Originally the author's doctoral dissertation, this is an important new work that challenges the patriarchal organization of society and posits that lesbianism is the basis of culture. Should be on your "essential reading" list

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Fantasia

OFF-COURT

Ann Marie Brown

Lori and I entered the university basketball program the same year, she a junior college transfer and I a freshman. We were entrants in a highly successful and competitive women's basketball program. By some strange luck, we were assigned the same dorm room. As a 5'6" guard, it was unusual to be paired with a 6'1" forward.

Our personalities were comparable: easygoing, casual, yet hardworking on the court and in our classes. New to the program and the university, we learned the ropes together. Lori's maturity helped me manage the dual roles of freshman and rookie.

From the start we were pals. To be totally honest, I was her number one fan. Her size, on-court presence, quickness and strength dazzled me. Not to mention her superbly crafted ass and tits, which I admired daily, stealing glances while she dressed and undressed.

From junior high school, I masturbated occasionally to fantasies of other girls. Even though I was raised to be straight, I was never frightened by or felt guilty about masturbating to thoughts of other girls' bodies. At college, I was soon masturbating daily, in the tub and in bed when I knew Lori had a class.

About six weeks into the semester, I found myself horny and masturbating in bed, with Lori in hers, all the time hoping and praying that she was sound asleeep. I relaxed after a couple of orgasms, vowing never to do it again with Lori so close by.

A couple of weeks later, in our room, Lori was consoling me for a mistake I had made in practice, which coach had let me know about. She walked up to me and put her hands on my shoulders. "It's no big deal. Coach will forget about it tomorrow." Looking into her eyes, and touching her, a warmth covered me. I immediately felt myself lubricating. I knew it was soaking my panties and running down my legs. I shuddered, wondering whether Lori would notice my reaction or smell me.

She said, still touching my shoulders, "You woke me up the other night!"

I stared at her, then dropped my eyes. "I'm so embarrassed, God, I didn't, did I?" I backed away from her.

"Oh, don't worry about it," she said. "It's normal. I do it all the time. And

(continued on page 39)

Sarita Johnson

CHECK UP

Robyn Weissman

Going to the dentist is one of the most dreadful, intimidating, anxiety-provoking experiences I can think of. Up until last week I imagined I would always feel that way. But about two weeks ago I saw an ad in the local gay paper:

Dr. Tamara Walker

DENTISTRY

for

THE LESBIAN COMMUNITY

822-7865

What the hell-- what could I lose? I was convinced my dentist (since childhood) took up dentistry because he could not find work abusing small animals. So I dialed the number

(continued on page 38)

Sextracts

LEATHER GODDESSES OF PHOBOS

A new computer game called "Leather Goddesses of Phobos" is now being sold by Infocom, a game software company. The game which is designed for either male or female players, has three versions: tame, suggestive, and lewd. The object of the game is to prevent evil deities from invading Earth through building the "Super-Duper Anti-Leather Goddesses of Phobos Attack Machine." The game works like the traditional computer adventure game, with the player typing in instructions and the computer indicating the result. A sequel, "The Gas Pump Girls Meet the Pulsating Inconvenience from Planet X," is planned. *--CTPSOSL*

RIGHT WING TOO DIRTY ON-THE AIR

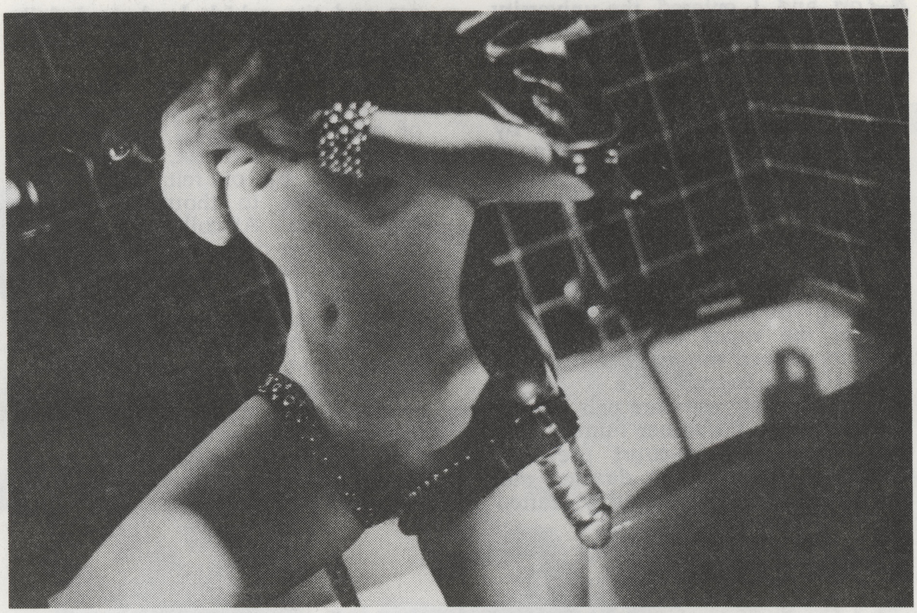
A Christian radio station in Texas last month pulled the plug on the "CAP Report," a show done by Citizens Against Pornography, when the right-wing spokesman for the group began to talk explicitly about gay sexual activity in adult bookstores. Radio management said the description was too graphic for the station, and cut him off. Ironically, the fundamentalist announcer for the program, Mark Weaver, complained that the censorship was a "violation of our rights." *--CTPSOSL*

I NEED A NEW DRUG

A controversal book recently published in England, *Sex Is Not Compulsory*, comes out against sex even in marriage. The author and her husband have been celibate for five years and recommend the practice. She calls sex "a drug" that should be dispensed with in favor of vegetarianism and similar remedies. *--CTPSOSL*

GALLUP: RIGHT OR WRONG?

For the first time in years, a recent Gallup Poll found a significant drop in support for legalizing homosexual relations. Only 33% of Americans favor such a move, compared to 54% in opposition. This is a drop from the 43% support when the question was first asked in 1977. In the current sample, 41% disapproved of the Supreme Court ruling on sodomy, versus 51% who supported it. 60% of those polled who were college graduates opposed the ruling. However, that was the only group tnat showed majority support on either question for the pro-gay position. Not surprisingly, the largest opposition to legalizing homosexuality came from the evangelicals in the sample, with about 70% against. *--CTPSOSL*



Elfi Mikesch

AIDS BETWEEN WOMEN: FIRST CASE REPORTED

The first instance of lesbian to lesbian sexual transmission of the AIDS virus has been documented in New York City. One of the lesbian lovers was an IV drug user, who became infected through needle use. She passed the virus onto her girlfriend through sexual contact. Female to female transmission of AIDS has always been considered a medical possibility but this is the first case which has been substantiated. While the menstrual blood contact is clearly high risk, it is not clear what caused the traumatic vaginal bleeding. Fisting or vigorous finger fucking without a latex glove to protect the vaginal tissue from abrasion is one possibility. Another risk would be using a dildo which is not entirely smooth and abrasion free. The point of this case is to alert lesbians to the fact that they are not mystically immune to the AIDS virus, and that sexual transmission between women is a realistic possibility.

For more information on lesbians, AIDS, and safe sex, contact the following:

- Women's AIDS Project
8235 Santa Monica Blvd.,
Suite 201
West Hollywood, CA 90046
(213) 650-1508
(Ask for the brochure *Lesbians Address AIDS*.)

-SF AIDS Foundation
333 Valencia Street, 4th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 863-AIDS (hotline)
(Ask for the pamphlets *Lesbians and AIDS* and *Women and AIDS*.)

-The Gay Men's Health Crisis
Women's Program
132 West 24th Street, Box 274
New York, NY 10011
(212) 807-6655 (hotline)

WOMAN TO WOMAN

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(415) 976-HERS

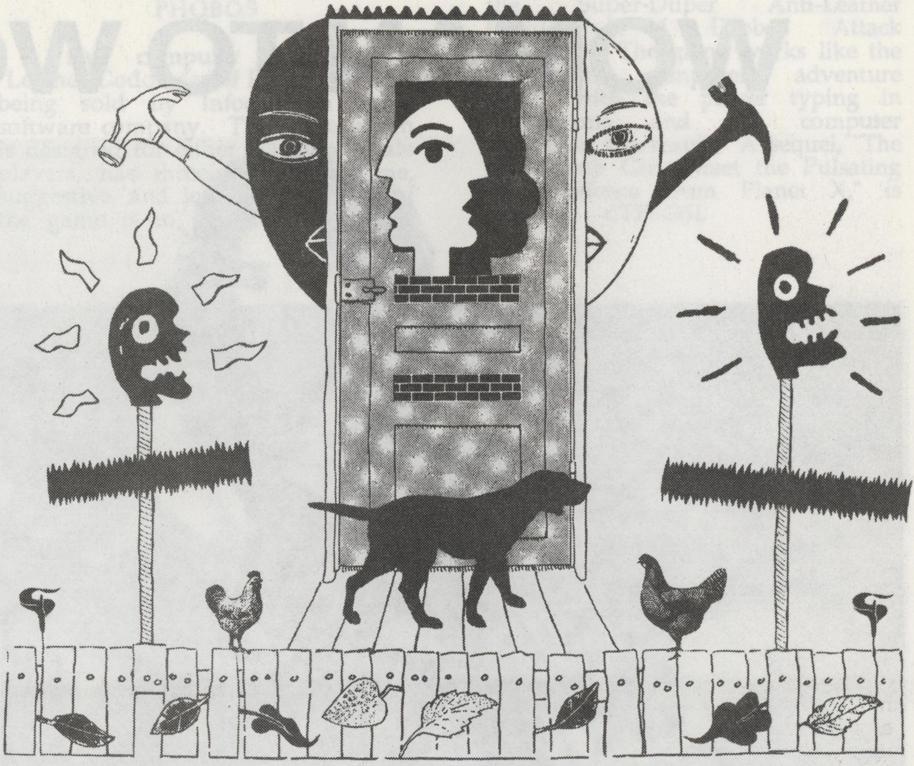
At last, a hot new fantasy line designed for Gay women. Dial 976-4377 and hear erotic tales of hot lesbian action making your wildest dreams come true. Created for women by women. It's for you. Just remember 976-HERS.

Must be 18 years old to call. $2.00 + tolls if any.

Sexpoint

ALMOST HEAVEN

Raven Crone



Anne Doering

We are five women, my three daughters (23, 21, 11), my lover, and myself. We built our own Cape Cod house in the Catskill Mountains from a kit. We call it "Heaven." We didn't hire some man to build it. We did it ourselves, thirty by thirty feet, two stories tall of it. Two bathrooms and three bedrooms of it. 70,000 pounds of lumber, windows, and doors and 750 pounds of a variety of nails of it. We lived in a tent and shed for the first three months of construction and had to get drunk after we saw the eighteen-wheeler delivering the wood. Talk about biting off more than we could chew!

We, at times, thought to divorce each other. The words "hard work" have a new meaning for all of us. So do the words "flush, level, and plumb."

The men in our farming community wrote an article about us for the neighborhood newspaper during the exterior construction. We must have done a decent job. It is unusual in these mountains for women to build. Of course, all of the women around here help their husbands to build barns, etc., but that's not building, as far as the men are concerned.

We have lived in our half finished "Heaven" now for two and a half years and the people around here have been exceptionally helpful. I thought the construction would take sixteen weeks because we were using a market kit. Goes to show how much I knew. Carpenters on their way to and from a job would stop by and give us good advice as well as a couple of beers. Women have stopped by with dinner. They must have known that we were too tired to think, much less cook. One woman left us the keys to her summer trailer so that we could go and take a hot bath until we had our well installed and the plumbing completed.

Life in "Heaven" was heaven until this May. Spring had finally arrived. No more snow. We were living it up.

One Friday we were all outside stacking wood when our dogs started chasing a man on a motorcycle. He stopped and returned to holler at us. He was ready to start a real drag out fight. We considered, after he left, that he was right. Our dogs could have caused his death on this hill, along with a resulting lawsuit, so we decided to keep the dogs in the house during the day for the rest of weekend until we could purchase a harness to chain them up during the day.

Almost every dog on this hill chases cars. I found out later from others that live on this hill that no one has ever had a complaint about their dogs. Everyone who goes through this back road slows down for their benefit. My nearest neighbor is a mile and a half away. Everyone keeps dogs for safety.

I believe we were set up. That Sunday night someone burned a cross on our lawn. A real Ku Klux Klan cross was burned on our lawn!

My children and I are black. My lover is white and the KKK only bothers with interracial couples in our area. They've progressed. They now recognize lesbians as couples.

What I don't understand about the KKK is how they can stand up to their fellows and tell them that they burned a cross on the lawn of a bunch of "women and children." I thought men had pride. Or is that what they want us to believe?

Life here in "Heaven" had been wonderful. I never even considered locking my doors although the bolder of the men came often to offer their sexual services. I answered them at the door with my Remington in hand. The gun is to show them that even though I was a city person I can handle what comes along. They understand that I mean what I say. And I do. I am a black woman. I have to handle what comes along.

After the cross was burned on our lawn we locked our doors and left the dogs out unchained all day and night for about three weeks. We gave up locking the doors after a while but the dogs still run free.

Anger filled our house at the time of the cross burning and we thought of many creative things to use my shotgun. But many people, men and women, called to say that they were not of the KKK type. It is now known that we are lesbians. The community was very shy about saying the word "lesbian" and most of them didn't say the word directly. They just referred to our "different sexual preferences." Even those people who were clearly of the Bible-fearing community did not negate our love. I thank them and the KKK for that. We don't have to hide now from the town and my daughter's classmates.

At first most people didn't look at us when we went to town. I don't feel our love life had anything to do with it. I just think that they saw the cross burning story in the newspapers and were ashamed of their peers. Some of them, though, would look us directly in the eyes, with sorrow expressed in theirs, and ask us how we were getting along. I told them. I expressed my anger and thanked them for their sympathy. They helped me get over the anger. They are the benefit of these mountains.

Lesbianism is being discussed in almost every household now. I can tell because my youngest daughter came home ferociously angry one day. She, eleven, didn't want to talk about what had happened. She is a very talkative child and for her to be quiet was unusual. So I pressed the case. She finally said that one of the girls in her class had started teasing her about her lesbian mother. She was on the verge of a fist fight but decided to use tact instead. She told the girl, "Your mother isn't as good as my mother. Your mother hasn't built a house. Your mother hasn't written a book. And besides, I have the best mother in the world, and my mother's friend is better than anybody, and I don't care what you think or say." The girl backed off.

I've had quiet discussions with many of the mothers of my daughter's friends. They say that they talked about my sexuality because their kids brought it up, but they really don't care who I go to bed with. They said that they told their children what lesbianism is and that was the end of the discussion. They thought that we were a lesbian couple all along before the gossip started. (They had never even hinted at it before!)

The mothers are satisfied. I know this because they still allow their daughters to spend the night with my daughter and they still invite her over to spend the night. My daughters don't suffer because of my sexual choice. I think it's because the people around here have had time to get to know this "strange black family" before my sexual preference came out in the public eye.

We, as a mixed couple, have never had trouble with racial problems. I know I'm black and she knows she's white. She as a white child grew up in a Puerto Rican ghetto and I grew up in a black ghetto with a mother who taught us to go for it, whatever it was, that was going to get us out of the ghetto. As a result neither one of us fit into our respective racial stereotype groups very well.

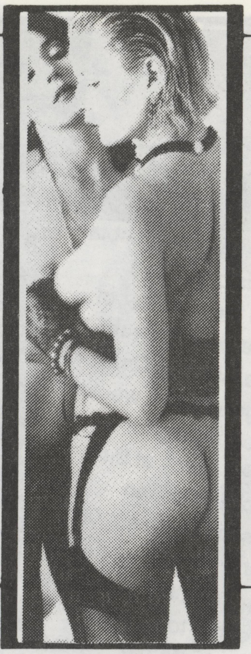
My lover sought psychiatric assistance to enable her to handle her anger resulting from the cross burnings. I did not. I told her that the past two years since we started building our home in "Heaven" have been the only time in my life that I have had any peace from racial degradation or sexual discrimination. I should have been prepared. I never wanted to be a pessimist and I don't want to be one now.

The burning has drawn us closer together. The town has drawn closer and friendships are tighter now. People just come up to us and start talking.

My lover, and she is a very good lover, is shocked at the burning. She does not know how to handle it although time has erased most of the anger. We, all of us, have clung to one other in our anger and out of it has come love and trust in others, our own abilities and each other. We have our family, these wonderful mountains, and the good people in them. Love makes it "all better." Or almost all better. We still watch the cars come and go on this road, though.

"How can you be so calm?" my lover asks me.

I am not calm. I am accepting. Acceptance catches on like love.



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L.A. READER

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BurLEZk...

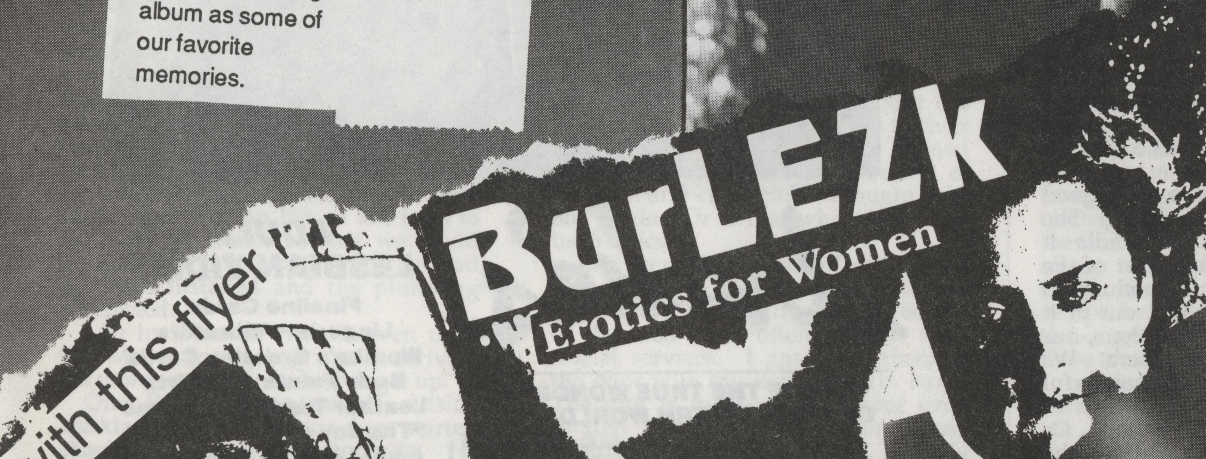
the longest running lesbian show in history. What started in the summer of 1984 as a benefit for the premiere issue of *On Our Backs* grew into a weekly show performing for capacity crowds at the Baybrick Inn in San Francisco. To date, 100 dancers have given their all to over 15,000 women who have come to see the lesbian striptease.

The phenomena of women's erotic entertainment was pioneered by Blush Productions. BurLEZk has spawned a whole range of imitators and innovators in lesbian entertainment, but ours is the grandmama, the show that put lesbian sex on the map.

There are so many unforgettable moments from the BurLEZk show. We offer the following album as some of our favorite memories.

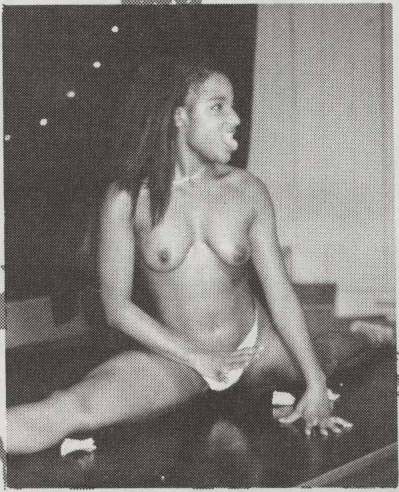
Let us entertain you....

Debi Sundahl
Nan Kinney, producers
Blush Productions



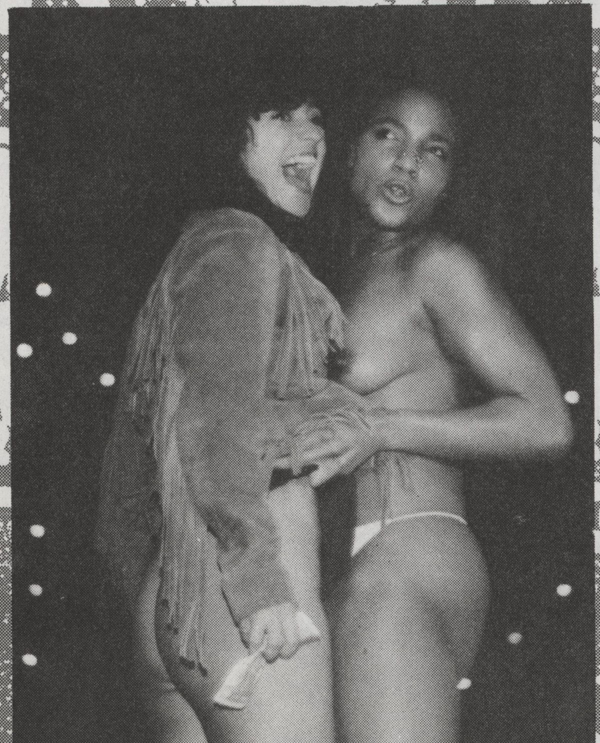
photos: Debi Sundahl, design: Terese Jungle

Aja blows out New Year's Eve



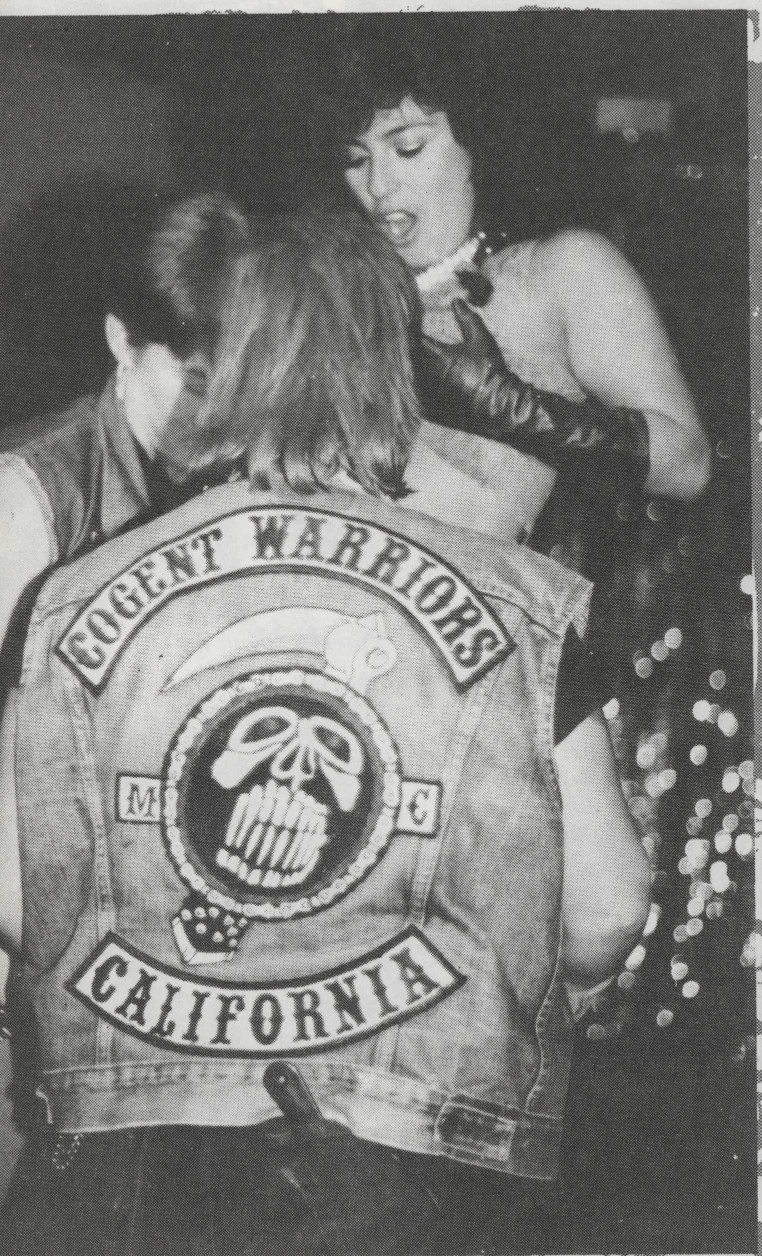
I got somethin' you want!

Sandra Dee can handle the gang.



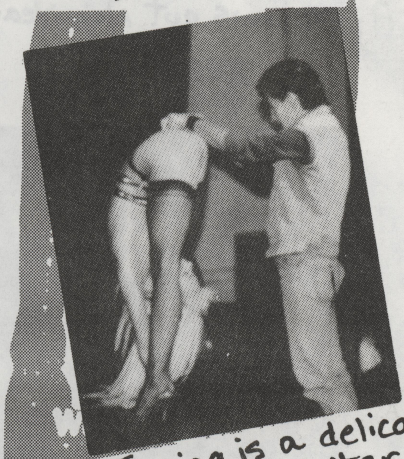
Kokomotion gets a feelin' from Pepper

Stripperly love–
Caerage & Ramona



Pepper pampers the regulars.

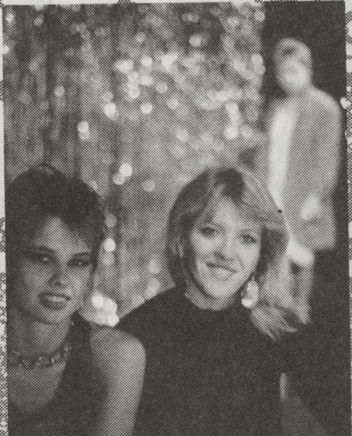
The staff hides out!
Beth, security; Scooter, DJ;
Nan, producer/cashier.
Tony, lighttech, is hiding.



Tipping is a delicate
matter.

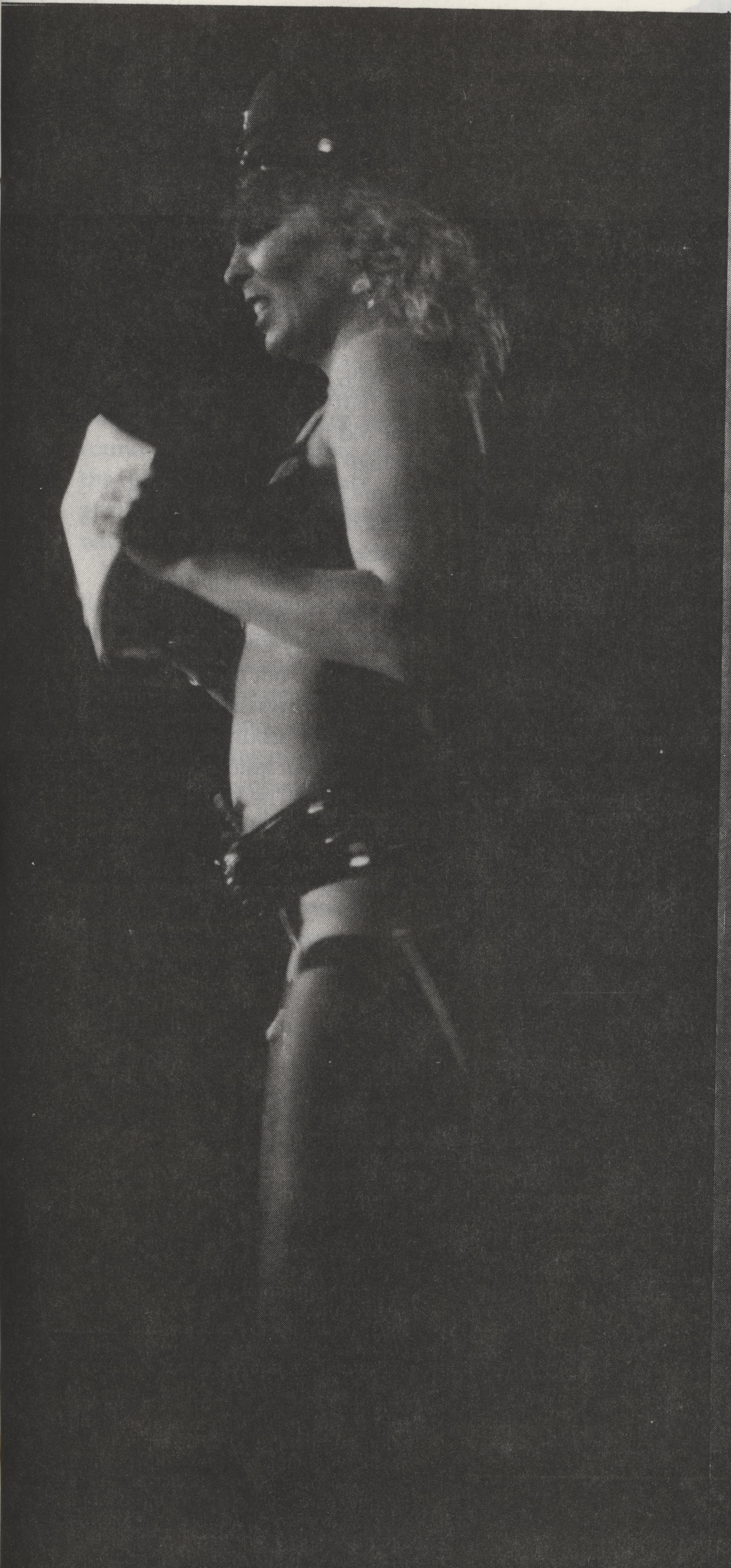
Toni Brooks
backstage

Lupe evokes the sexual
spirits.



Denisha & Cassie

Susie Bright celebrates her
B-day with a big-booby cake
and Honey Lee at AIDS benefit.



Fallon issues parking tickets to collect tips for the BurLEZK Strip for AIDS benefit April, 1986

The dancing cop wanted money before she'd leave DeDe

CHAPTER 17

By Armistead Maupin
SPECIAL TO THE EXAMINER

>

★ ★ ★

By implicit mutual consent they got mildly tanked on white wine spritzers at the Baybrick Inn. Much mellower now, DeDe began to see the Halcyon family as an albatross with which D'orothea had been unfairly burdened.

Maybe the women's music festival was really D'or's way of getting away from all that. Maybe she was right. Maybe they both needed time in the wilds, time to regroup and rethink, time to nourish the love they felt for each other.

She was on the verge of saying something when the floor show began. It was a stripper — a sinewy woman in full police drag who made a beeline for their table,< bumping and grinding all the way. DeDe giggled uncontrollably as the lady cop began gesturing lewdly with her nightstick.

She looked across the table at D'or, whose brown eyes were glimmering playfully. "You set this up, didn't you?"

Her lover's lip curled slightly. "She's waiting," she said. "You'd better give her something."

The stripper was rubbing her hips against the back of DeDe's chair, egged on by the roar of a hundred women.

"Give her something? Money, you mean?"

"Of course money!"

> The stripper removed her police helmet and held it in front of DeDe, who fumbled frantically in her purse. The crowd was going wild. "How much?" DeDe asked, turning to D'or for guidance.

"The twenty," said D'or.

"Isn't that a little too . . .?"

"It's for AIDS. Go on, give it t her."

She placed the bill in the helmet to the sound of tumultuous applause. To signal her gratitude the cop leaned over and stuck her tongue in DeDe's ear.

★ ★ ★

Recapping the evening, they laughed a lot as they sped home to Hillsborough in their big Buick station wagon. When the city lights were gone and the highway became a dark ribbon through the hills, they both fell silent for a while, with DeDe stealing occasional glances at the volatile, loving woman behind the wheel.

"D'or?" she said at last.

"Yeah?"

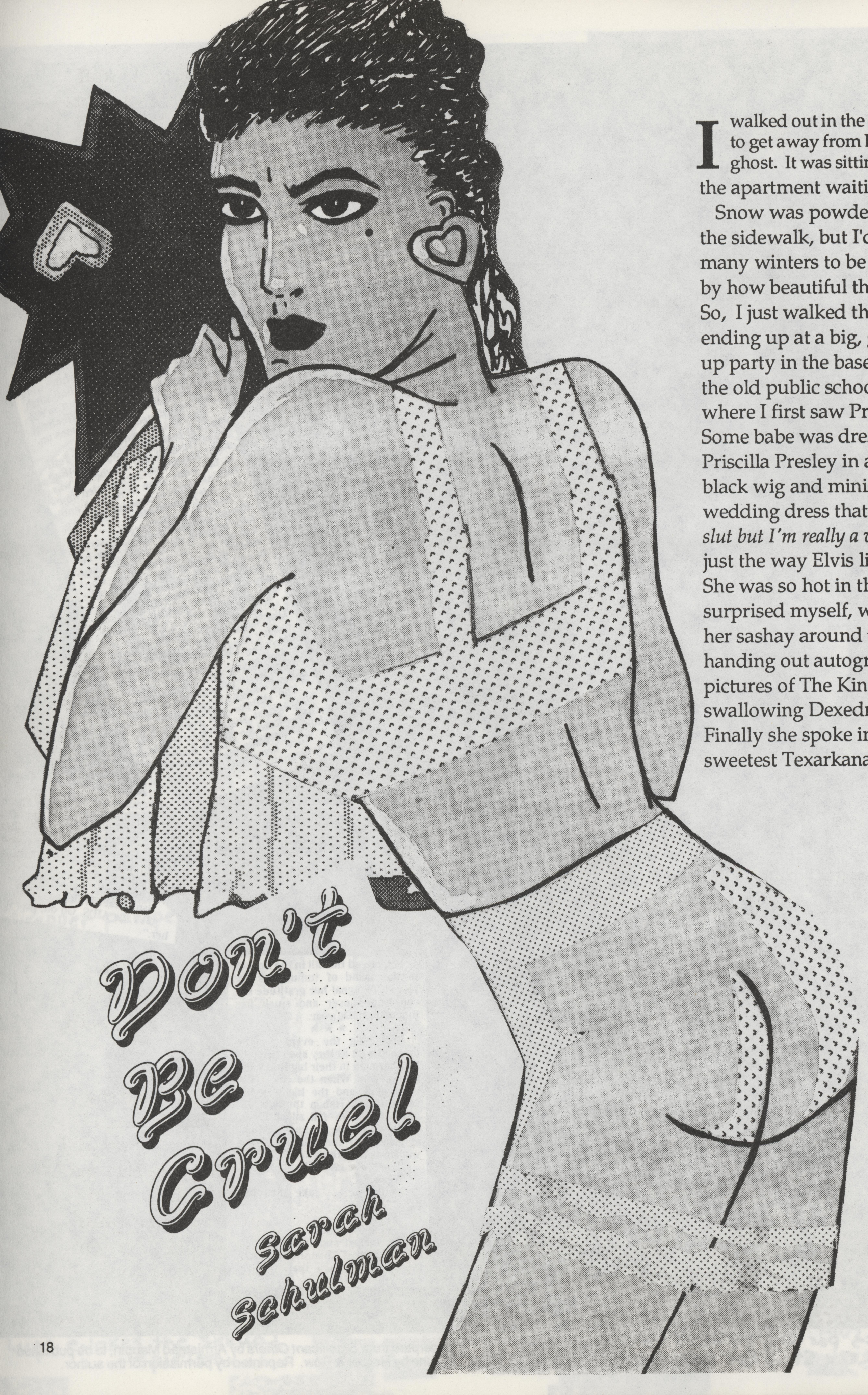
"Could we ... take the children?"

"Where?"

"You know where."

D'or turned and smiled at her sleepily. "Sure." Then she squeezed DeDe's leg. "I knew that stripper would do the trick."

Excerpted from *Significant Others* by Armistead Maupin, to be published in June by Harper & Row. Reprinted by permission of the author.



Don't Be Cruel

Sarah Schulman

I walked out in the snow trying to get away from Dolores's ghost. It was sitting back in the apartment waiting for me.

Snow was powdering up the sidewalk, but I'd seen too many winters to be surprised by how beautiful they can be. So, I just walked through it, ending up at a big, gay dress-up party in the basement of the old public school. That's where I first saw Priscilla. Some babe was dressed up as Priscilla Presley in a long, black wig and miniskirt wedding dress that said *I'm a slut but I'm really a virgin*, just the way Elvis liked it. She was so hot in that dress I surprised myself, watching her sashay around the hall, handing out autographed pictures of The King and swallowing Dexedrine. Finally she spoke in the sweetest Texarkana voice.

"Honey, take me for a ride in your Chevrolet."

"You look good in that dress," I said.

"How good?"

She was smiling then but I knew she was serious.

"Real good."

It all happened so quickly I was almost suprised when Priscilla walked me into a chair and pushed her breasts into my face. I patted her ass round and round, pulling on the rubber seat of her panty girdle and letting it snap back with a slap.

When we reached the dance floor it got even hotter. I'd never gotten so hot so fast for a girl I didn't know before. She wrapped me up in her pink tulle veil and I could hear the crinkling of polyester as our bodies rubbed together.

"You really do it for me, Priscilla."

She looked up with her orange lipstick and tons of black eyeliner, smelling cheap, like *Charlie* or *Sen-Sen*.

"Honey, you got strong arms. My daddy is a military man and I know power when I feel it."

The music stopped and everyone started mingling again, but every now and then she'd look my way and I knew for sure how hot it was going to be.

There were maybe a hundred people there that night, but all I saw was Priscilla. Otherwise I sat in the chair preoccupied, like sleep or just waiting. In that chair I dreamed that all my teeth were falling out into my hands. I kept trying to stuff them back in until I woke up. Priscilla was standing right over me, red and shaking. Her demeanor was gone. So was her accent.

"That bitch," she said.

"What's the matter?"

I thought she was talking to me.

"That bitch in the leather jacket. That woman fucked me and then she fucked me over, and I'm going to give her hell for it right now."

She flicked her bracelets down her wrist in a way that let me know Pris was just an old time femme. She was ready to walk over to Ms. Leather Jacket and slap her face, provoking a huge scene. Priscilla's blood was boiling. She stamped her feet.

"Oooh, that bitch."

"Pris," I said, getting straight right away. "Before you let her have it, why don't you change out of your costume."

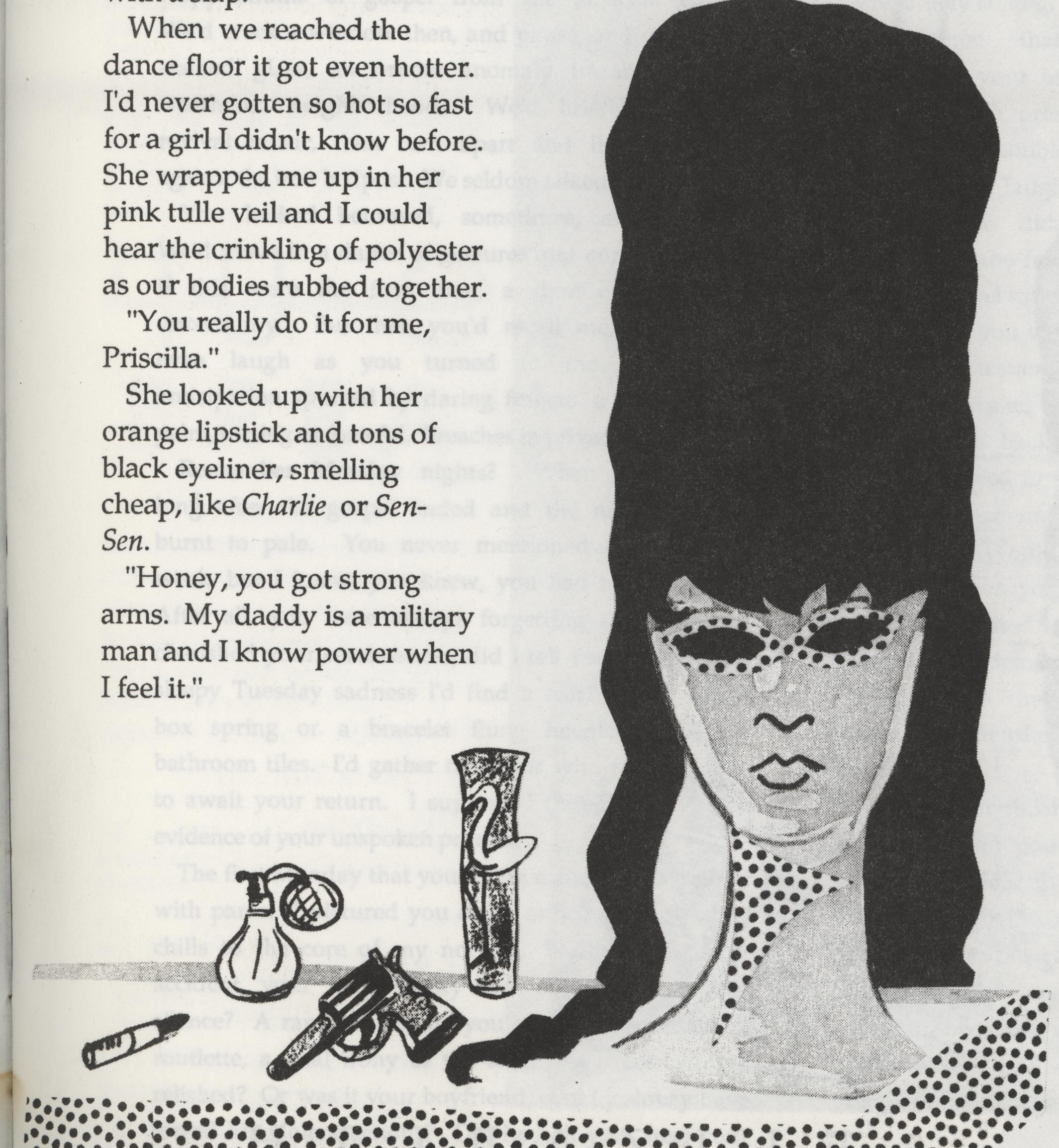
"Goddamn that bitch, she can't get away with this."

"Pris darlin'," I held her firmly by the shoulders. "Get out of the costume. You'll feel better."

"You think so?"

"Yeah. She'll never take you seriously in a white mini wedding gown. Come on, I'll help you change."

As we stepped into the heatless back room and she took off her wig, I realized I needed to get a grip on myself if I didn't want always to end up in situations like this one. She stepped out of her dress and left it lying in a heap on the floor. She washed the



Terese Jungle

(continued on page 46)

MONDAY NIGHTS

Goldie Rivers

"Honey, take me for a ride in your Chevrolet."

We were on the dance floor—dressed up—and she was so ready to dance.

"I'm not ..."

She was smiling then but I knew she was serious.

"Feel good."

It all happened so quickly I was almost suprised when Priscilla walked me into a chair and pushed her breasts into my face. I patted her ass round and round, pulling on the rubber seat of her panty girdle and letting it snap back with a slap.

When we reached the dance floor it got even hotter. I'd never gotten so hot so fast for a girl I didn't know before. She wrapped me up in her pink tulle veil and I could hear the crinkling of polyester as our bodies rubbed together.

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"Honey, you got strong arms. My daddy is a military man and I know power when I feel it."

ELIZABETH PINCUS

Remember Monday nights? When pleasure meant the fast fading winter light through cracked and dusty windows. I never bought curtains and you never seemed to mind; the silhouettes were unbeatable, you've got to admit. The rooftops were unaligned and the chimneys askew, the freeway a remote allusion of stars slipping calmly into the bay. The lights of city hall shone mutely in our windows. Imagine, the eyes of the law upon us-- and the fire escape forced bold, worn, metal diagonals across our urban landscape.

We always knew it was Monday, of course, by the raspy strains of gospel from the adjacent church. We'd crack a window then, and pause, and peer at the stained glass, an ornate anomaly in an otherwise weathered neighborhood. We'd briefly savor the revival music, then turn apart and linger, so still, against the iron bedpost. We seldom talked.

You looked bemused, sometimes, and cautious. We'd move in a dance of gestures and curious eyes, as if this were the first time, a time of compelling uncertainty. But then you'd recall me, and maybe even laugh as you turned to me once more, anticipation spurred by daring fingers, a thigh, cheek, palm, teasing or forceful. Breaches in privacy.

Remember Monday nights? When you'd leave, long after the gospel ended and the night sky had burnt to pale. You never mentioned the following week, but I knew, you knew, you had to come back. After all, you were always forgetting something. I cherished your carelessness, did I tell you that? In my sleepy Tuesday sadness I'd find a scarf caught in the box spring or a bracelet flung heedlessly on the bathroom tiles. I'd gather the items with fanatical care to await your return. I suppose I thought I gathered evidence of your unspoken promise.

The first Monday that you didn't come I was wracked with panic. I pictured you dead, and it sent ravishing chills to the core of my nerves. Would it be a car accident, your wiry beauty torn and contorted into silence? A random assault, you as the pawn in urban roulette, a final irony of the shadowy streets you so relished? Or was it your boyfriend; could jealousy have forced his violent actions? Did he halt you, steal your breath, with the same satin cord you secured for our feminine embraces?

Not once, mind you, never in my gory imaginings did I think you'd willingly stay away. You called me, Wednesday noon or thereabouts, and blithely dismissed your absence. My numbed response left no clue to the depth of my shock. My thoughts, so vivid in their fantasy, took a sordid turn towards despondency. Still, come Monday, I would win you back. I remained so certain.

Oh, but my determination proved foolhardy, turned sour. Several Mondays passed; you came, but disinterest colored your attentions. With a pain I quiver to recall, you loomed vermin-ridden, irreparably tainted. How easy to hate.

Remember that following Monday, distraction shining in your hardened eyes? Did you notice my agitation, the pressure I bore upon your upturned wrists? We tumbled recklessly then with mismatched fervor. Your laughter did not address my seething. I suspect you didn't notice how the fire escape threatened, the freeway traffic pulsated in evil silence, and the gospel sounds, insistent as ever, grew satanic.

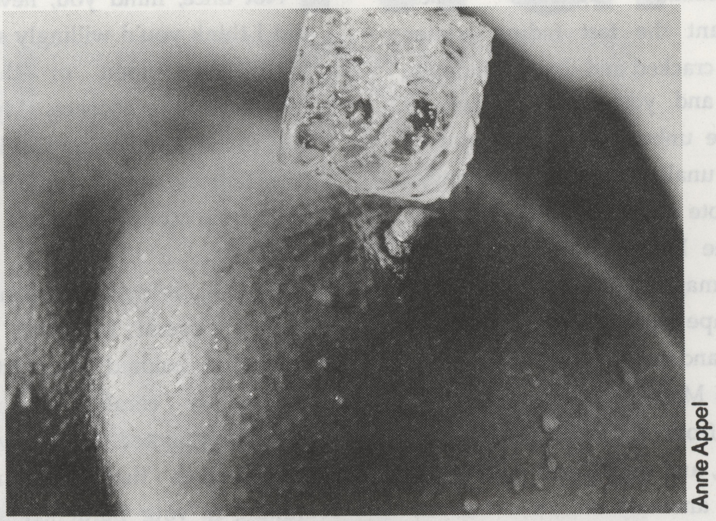
I suspect you weren't aware that the pile of collected objects, a testament to our weekly worship, was becoming an altar of murderous intent.

You came back one last Monday. That week of waiting passed in suspended agony. Anticipation has never been so fine. You walked in so languidly, so cocksure. Would I have forgiven a more pitiful stance? When you told me you were leaving me-- so now you wanted to talk, you hypocrite-- I spit in your face. Your demeanor never faltered; you wiped the phlegm with the back of your hand, excrutiatingly fastidious, then licked it clean with a tongue eager for dalliance.

And in our finishing, our flesh had no secrets. Our velvet friction pounding, our ire piqued to a height unrecountable, I sought to maim your loveliness. But my physical will could not alter your glory, my hands could not settle where they desired on your sloping throat. No, but I pissed on your fertile shame and tore at your sweetest sentiments. I sliced your insipid intentions. I brought you to an infernal rage, then I forgot you instantly.

The next day I hired your assassin.

She'll find you. Come Monday night.



Anne Appel

WARMING UP

Tasha Belifore

At the Women's Sexuality Conference I attended in Toronto in November 1986, Gretna Hofmann Nemiroff said that we have focused on sex as a problem, and not as a project of empowerment, healing and pleasure. Since sex as an activity and as a partial self-definition is a crucial part of our political, creative and social selves, it is interesting to pay close attention to how, when and if we talk about sex.

I also attented the International Lesbian Conference last March in Geneva, Switzerland. I assumed it would be about being a lesbian, and being from different countries and cultures. That turned out to be true in a political or legal sense, but it was not about being a lesbian as far as sex was concerned. There was one, vaguely-defined workshop on sex (out of 30+) which was so well attended that it broke up into three groups. As I arrived late to the workshop, I was greeted by a woman leaving saying it was boring, that they were only talking about relationships and that she wanted to talk about sex. Clearly, there were many women besides myself who want to be talking about sex.

Indeed they were talking about relationships, about lesbians losing interest in sex after a number of years with one lover, about how to maintain love and intimacy without hot sex, and related subjects. This is where, I thought, it would be appropriate, even necessary, to talk about our sex lives, how to add excitement to sex, to create a sexual language that is hot. As I sat quietly for a bit and caught up with the tone of the workshop, I distinctly noticed things were not being said. I wondered if there had been a decision at the beginning which I had missed, *not* to talk about sex. Finally one woman said, "I know we're not supposed to be talking about fucking, but ..." and continued her comment which was more or less about fucking. I asked if in fact a decision had been made to that effect. There was a long silence. Finally the facilitator said no, she didn't know where this idea had come from. Eventually, women who had been silent began to talk. We talked about lesbian erotica, power in bed, lesbian S/M, societal/cultural taboos and how to get beyond them, as well as many other things. In some ways, I accepted the discussion of relationships as a warming-up phase, but it was obvious that two hours later, we were just getting warmed up.

We censor ourselves. We impose the same censorship on ourselves which we are afraid the straight male world will impose on us. Perhaps after so many millenia of our sexuality as women and as lesbians being invisible, or after the decades of prescriptive lesbian-feminist "correct" behavior being imposed, we have spent far too much time talking about equality, power and relationships without talking about fucking. The only way to talk about these things without talking about sex itself is to take the sex out of our lives, which I, for one, am not willing to do.

The Women's Sexuality Conference was the first organized gathering of feminists I had attended where the sole and express purpose was to talk about sex. I was interested because we lack a format or language for talking about sex that is not theoretical or abstract.

There were organized talks on sexual violence, the language of sex in our society from the past to the present, and how both relate to our sexual selves, and on ourselves politically as lesbians, straight women and bisexuals. Workshop topics ranged from such things as sexual toys, writings and videos, to discussions of ourselves as bi women in a straight/lesbian dichotimized movement, as women of color in a mostly white movement, as survivors of sexual violence or abuse, patriarchal images of women, the effects of food, drug and alcohol abuse, and how our sexual selves have formed because of and in spite of the world around us.

The workshop called "Pleasures" did the most thorough job of warming up its participants. The facilitators read first from a number of sex manuals, modern and ancient, bits of erotica, then presented an array of sex toys and aids in a matter-of-fact manner, passing them around the

(continued on page 44)

BREAKING THE ICE

In "Warming Up", Tasha Belfiore asks a lot of hard questions about the scarcity of frank sexual dialogue in our community. Debi Sundahl, publisher of On Our Backs, *and Susie Bright, editor, decided to have a candid conversation in response to Tasha's challenge:*

SB: Why do you think many lesbians find it difficult to speak freely about sex?

DS: No one talks easily about sex. The taboo is strong there's a tremendous fear of rejection. We are afraid our own friends will be appalled at our secrets.

SB: What topic do you think is most taboo among lesbians?

DS: Men and masculinity, as fantasies or as sexual partners. Bisexuality has never been defined for lesbians except in terms of unrealistic absolutes. Some women fantasize about men without ever having sex with them, yet the separatist influence of the '70s has scared these women into believing they are bisexual or straight at heart. Some lesbians have fucked a man, or think about being a man, or see themselves as a woman with a cock. The traditional definitions of bisexuality and lesbianism do not relate to the complicated and contradictory nature of real lesbian sex lives. The old politics don't provide answers; they don't even ask the right questions.

SB: Does it make you angry that everyone is spending so much time keeping secrets about men? Don't you feel that the taboo gives more power to men and to heterosexuality than either category deserves? Lesbians are embarrassed to talk about masculinity because it supposedly threatens the goal of being gynocentric. Yet by keeping quiet about it, the issue has more power than if we had talked about it openly from the beginning.

DS: First of all, the "anger" that was fashionable in feminist politcs in the '60s and '70s burnt me and other women emotionally and physically, and destroyed the trust and optimism needed for discussion and group stability. Anger played too large a part in uncovering and dealing with our oppression as women, because too many of us got stuck in it. When dealing with an oppressor, one's instinct is to expunge all traces of the oppression from our being. How realistic is this attitude? Is it really a paradox to loathe patriachy yet take some of its systems and redefine them on our own terms? Power as a system comes to mind. It isn't inherently male. We have come a long way in twenty years, and have made progress toward internalizing our freedoms. We longer need to keep policing ourselves so strictly, afraid that somehow we will slip. If we put our sexual energy into women, we are gynocentric. We are lesbian.

SB: But what about lesbians who say, "I don't think about men. I don't

(continued next page)

fantasize about men. I've never wanted to fuck a man, and I resent you having this conversation." What do you say to that?

DS: Why should they resent? They have their groups and their friends where men are so rarely discussed. They could check out their discomfort and learn a little tolerance for their peers.

SB: Asking for tolerance has been like asking for the moon with a lot of closeted women. They may be "out" publically, but they don't reveal the sexual nature of their lesbianism. But understanding the varied nature of lesbian sexuality is neither a threat nor a compromise. On the contrary, it has been liberating and empowering to every woman who explores it. Ignornance has not been bliss. It has led to a insane state of hypocrisy among lesbian women.

DS: I agree. Another issue lesbians are reluctant to talk about is our cunts. "Cunt" and "cock" are NOT inherently entwined. By ignoring our cunts, we do not get the men out of their lives. Lately there's been a resurgence of women talking about their cunts and fucking, just like we talk about our clitoris. The desire for fistfucking, if you allow yourself to feel that, is a reclaiming of our cunts that screams, "Fuck me, I love my cunt. I love to feel you inside me."

SB: I've noticed a popular notion that lesbians are associated with cunnilingus. The real secret is that lesbians who enjoy fucking have been at the forefront of all the discoveries we've made about the G-Spot, and other pleasures through vaginal penetration. Because lesbian sex is not determined by penis/vagana prescriptions, we've been able to explore penetration on a level that neither heterosexuals nor gay men have the slightest idea about. I think lesbians really know more about fucking than anybody, they're just not talking.

What about masturbation? Do you think most dykes do it?

DS: I think most do. It's not a big deal. I'm sure there's still some element of guilt after you masturbate like not being able to look your sex toy in the eye. Some women still find it hard to admit, or hide masturbating from their lovers because they're afraid it would be considered a criticism of their relationship.

SB: Many of our critics think we're frivolous to be spending all this time talking about sex. There are serious problems in the world, and here we are talking about our orgasm! They make this appeal to our sense of sexual "shame", which plays on everyone's upbringing. It took us so long to say YES to sex--it was traditional, and "womanly" to say NO. We cannot allow sexual shame to be another excuse for silence, for ignorance about the place of sexuality in our lives.

DS: Sex is about pleasure. Pleasure is important in this life, as much as our stoicism would deny it. I'd go so far as to say that for some people pleasure becomes part of their spirituality. For others, sex means mental and physical health and well-being. Ask any couple's counselor what is most often the cause of a breakup. They will tell you money or sex.

> *... we have completely neglected talking about our own sexual imagery, developing our own erotic language.*

SB: For me, it's more than just a sense of well-being. My sexual pleasure is also an expression of my deviant identity in a very narrow-minded world. Why am I gay if I was raised to be the perfect little girl? Why am I a lesbian femme and also a very stubborn feminist? I find sexual insight to be extremely enlightening on every other aspect of society. Sexual freedom, for example, is the hardest test you can give to any list of civil rights. By looking at the sexual values in a community, you can tell a lot about how authoritarian that culture is; how much freedom there is in that world.

The fight to come out of the closet has been only possible because to some degree, we HAD to talk about sex, as much as some people wanted to shelter the heterosexuals forever.

SB: In Tasha's article, she says, "My main objection is if you look at a picture of more than one woman having sex, there will always be someone doing something and someone having it done to her. By the same token, even if there is only one woman, the erotic image must objectify her because we do not know her. Here's the question: "Is it in fact possible to create an erotic image that is equal?"

DS: The feminist definition of objectification needs to be re-examined. For one thing, it has a different meaning in the context of sexuality, rather than sexism.

SB: I find there are two things going on. One is talking about real people in real relationships. Do you have equality? And the other thing is pictures, between people and pictures. Pictures put out a variety of different messages to their audience, and it's not nearly as simple as monkey see, monkey do.

When we look at erotic picures in particular, we have a context for understanding that we're entertaining a fantasy. You can't pretend to understand that you know everything about how the image was made. Remember that comment we got about *On Our Backs* 's very first centerfold, the "Bulldagger of the Season"? One critic wrote, "How do I know I can turn on to this woman? She might be a racist. She might be a bad person." But what a useless examination! Those remarks did nothing but cloak the viewer's natural response to the picture, which would have meant revealing a part of the reviewer's sexual identity.

A picture is like story, a fiction that is created by the artist who hope to make an ineraction with your sexual feelings. Everyone brings their own erotic identity to bear upon the picture. There will never be a picture that is equal to all people, or a picture that is even SEXUAL to all people. Some people find eroticism in a splash of paint on the wall, or in a photograph of a kitchen table top--they bring their whole memory and emotions to bear on the subject image. It's only when we see inflammatory images, like a woman in bondage for example, that people start jumping to conclusions about "What this means." If we weren't so erotically illiterate as a society, we wouldn't be so astounded by unusual sexual imagery.

DS: I am glad you answered the question about perceiving images. I get too impatient with that question to even take it seriously and want to say something flippant like "go take Intro to Art 101."

Sexual representation on the whole needs to reflect the diversity of all people's individual sexual expression. To me, this is the basis of the phrase "art is political." Let's be honest. Are we upset because we are sick of seeing women's beautiful bodies everywhere? Or are we upset with who that body speaks to: the white, the feminine, the heterosexual. I think we are upset because the images we would be attracted to or identify with are nonexistent--lesbian couples, for one; or androgyny, or ethnic representation, or sexy masculinity for those of us who need that image to be aroused, including female masculinity. On and on.

SB: Alternative imagery is very difficult to find. In the meantime, a good part of the women's movement has made a highly sensational case that sexism IS pornography, pure and simple; that to understand one is to understand the other. When you say "sexism" nowadays, people don't think about the ERA, or economic

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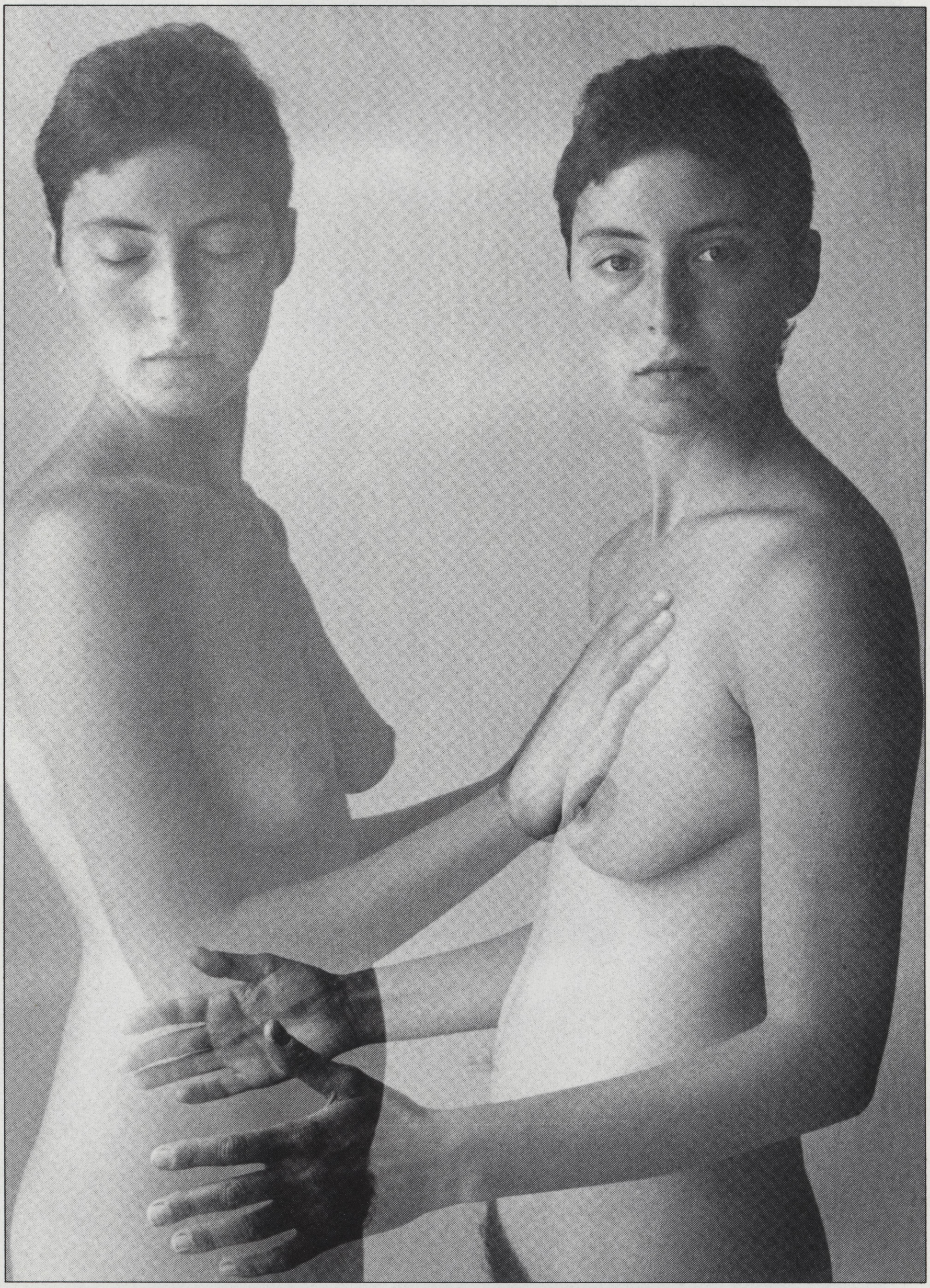
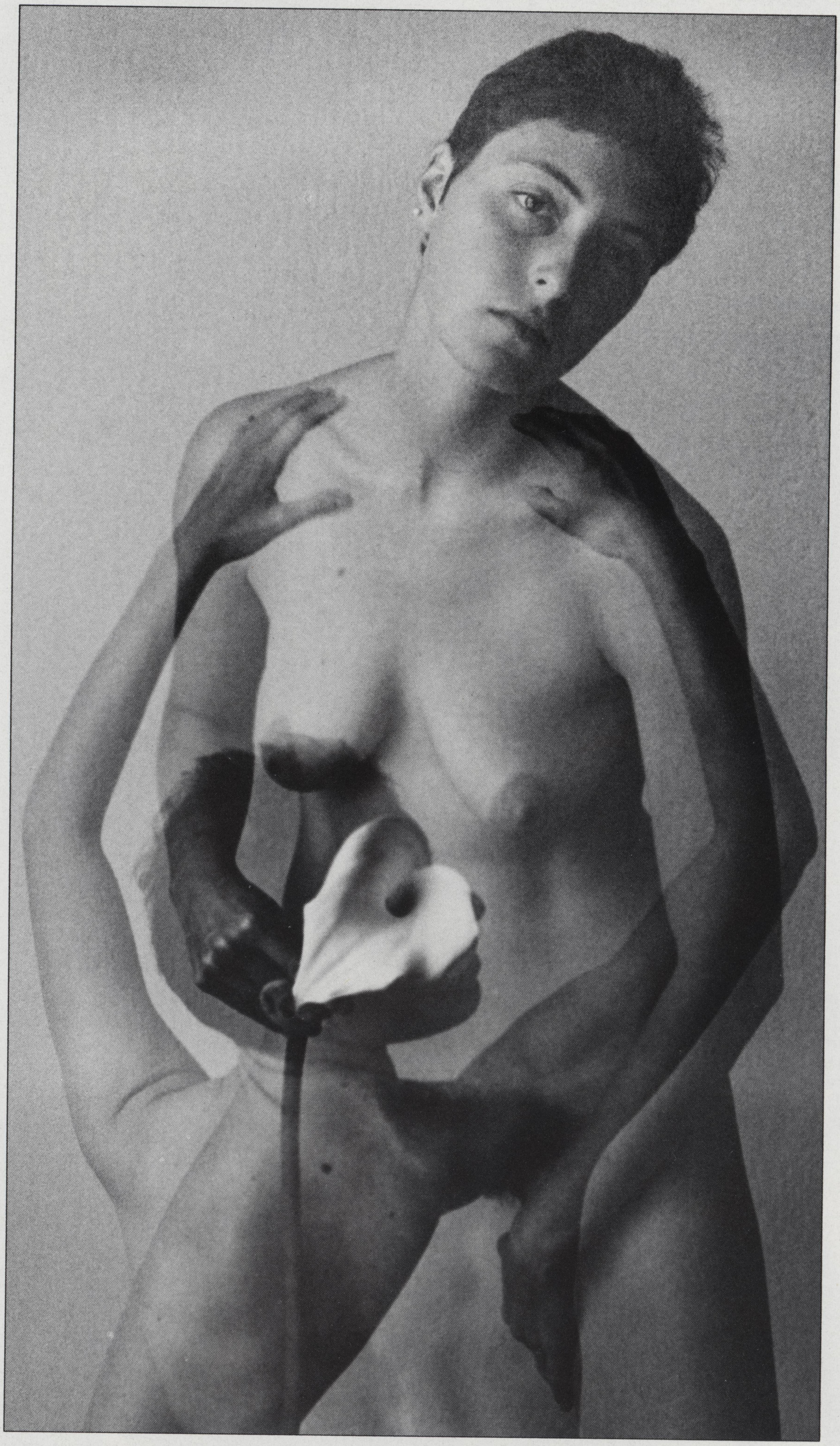
self-portraits

CALLA LILIES



PHOTOGRAPHY BY PATTI LEVEY



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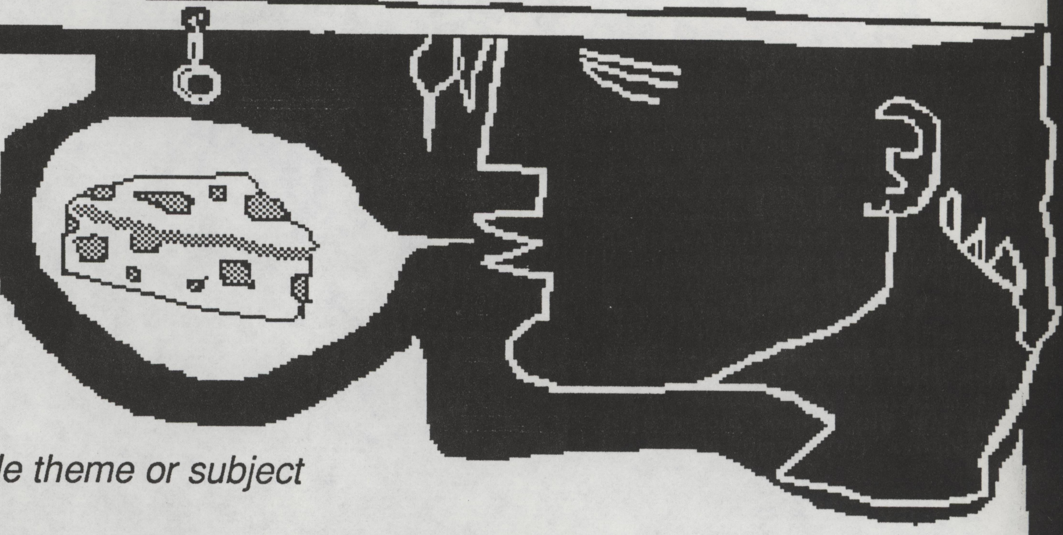
All Winning Photos will be published in On Our Backs



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5-10 photos on a single theme or subject

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I hereby give On Our Backs/Blush Productions permission to publish photographs of myself. I understand that editorial matter will accompany these photographs and my name will not appear, unless I request it. I certify that I am over 18 and possess full legal capacity to execute the foregoing authorization.

Date____________________

Name____________________

Date of Birth____________________

Signature____________________

Photographer's Name____________________

RULES:

1. Contest is open to all except for the staff and families of Blush Productions.
2. Photographs must be black and white prints any size.
3. Entries without self-addressed stamped envelopes will not be returned.
4. All entries must be original work which has not been publiished before.
5. All photographs must have the photographer's name, address and phone number printed on back. *On Our Backs* is not responsible for unidentified photos.
6. Entrants may submit any number of photos in the "single photo" category and/or the "photo series" category.
7. Photos with recognizable models must be accompanied by a model's release (see sample at right). All models must be 18 or over.
8. Send photographer's name address, phone number and model release with your contest entry to:

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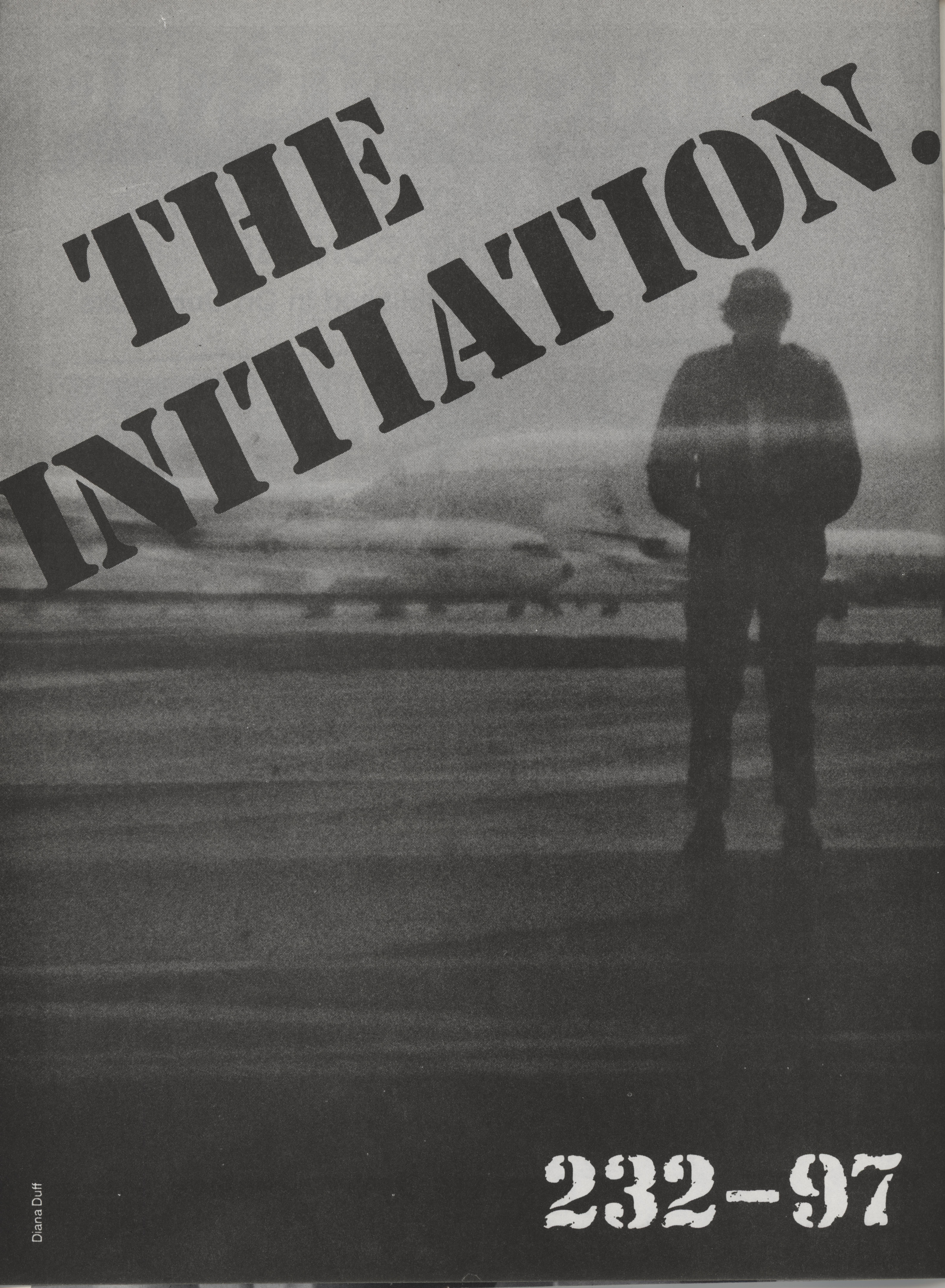
San Francisco, CA 94114

DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES: JUNE 1, 1987



THE INITIATION.

232-97

Diana Duff

Diana Duff

Gonzalez hoped the new pilot would be a woman. It had been a long dry spell since Sarge Shapiro made her time and transferred out. Gonzalez had even tried making it with one of the guys, but there was nothing there. Gonzalez needed a woman.

That's why she was so glad to see the new pilot. Jones come in through the airlock, ducking to clear the low doorway, then straightened and looked around with her tight little mouth in a V-shaped smile. She was short, barely taller than Gonzalez, with nice broad shoulders and a steady, straight-legged stance. Her round, smooth-skinned face wore its tough cocky expression a little self-consciously. She looked, in fact, like any newly-qualified transport pilot on her first combat assignment.

The whole outfit had gathered by the airlock for the occasion, some still nursing deep-freeze headaches. The last thing they remembered was being put under back at base, but after one day awake cooped up on the ship they were already bored. The old pilot greeted Jones with undisguised relief. The 232-97th detatchment was ten days from a combat drop, and he didn't want that drop between himself and fighter school.

For Jones, the new pilot, the drop would be her first chance to prove herself, to show she had the guts and skill to take the troops down to enemy ground and then back up again. She shook his hand firmly and asked if he'd show her around the transfer vehicle.

First he introduced her informally to the rest of the platoon. Jones's eyes behind her wraparound space-shades lingered on Gonzalez. Gonzalez flashed her the same winning smile she used to pick girls at the bar. She could hardly wait for the night.

It was already free-time, two hours till lights out. The lieutenant went off and did whatever it was that officers did, Sarge Chiu chomped his unlit cigar over a war-game machine, and the grunts got together to make plans for carrying out time-honored tradition. Gonzalez kept her hopes to herself, even though all the guys knew how horny she was. Harless, Brown, Wozniac-- all of them threw her knowing looks.

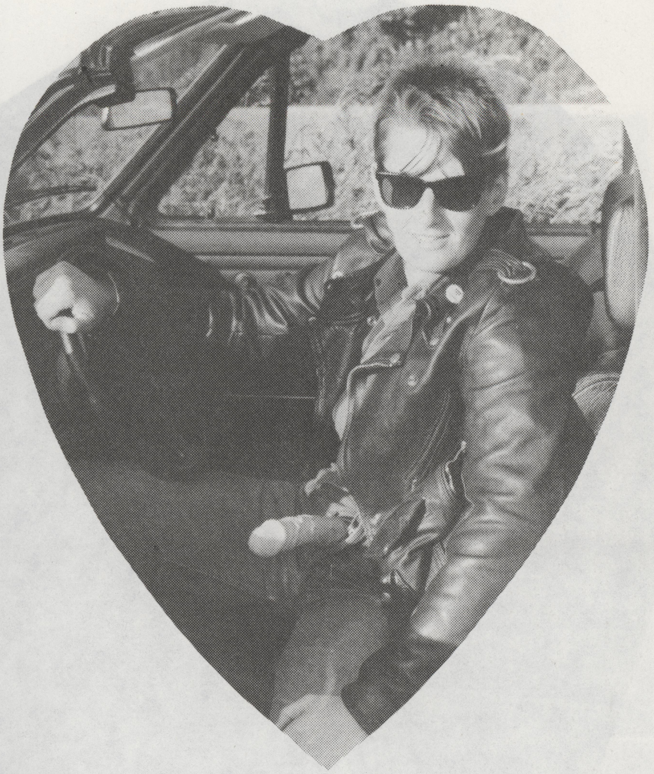
(continued on page 40)

Rebecca Ripley

Hearts Desire

photographs
by Barbie Painter
and Tempest Storm

Tomales Bay State Park
Hearts Desire
Beach



Reviews

IN VIDEO

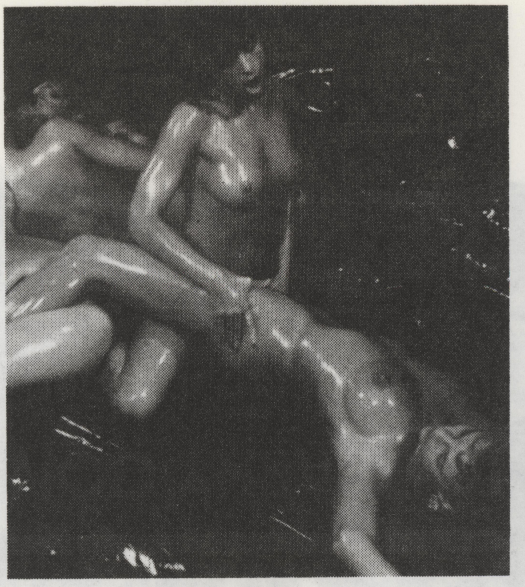
AEROBISEX GIRLS
4-Play Video, 1986

***Aerobisex Girls Club* is one of those "all girl" videos** produced by a mainstream adult company. What it has going for it, though, is a great cast of sensuous lesbian and bi-sexual actresses. One of the appealing things about the video is its graphic display of sex toys, particularly vibrators and dildos of all sizes. If you ever wondered what to do with anal beads, the aerobisex dykes will teach you all that you need to know. Another plus, depending on your perspective, is the video's length.

Aerobisex Girls Club is a two hours-plus full length feature. After the first hour I was hot and bothered, but after the second I was tired and ready for nap time.

Best bet for the hottest scene in the video is the no-holds-barred Wesson Oil orgy at the end of the tape. All seven women take off like there's no other reason for living.

– Andrea Lewis



Aerobisex girls in action

IN PRINT

CAUGHT LOOKING: FEMINISM, PORNOGRAPHY AND CENSORSHIP
Kate Ellis, Nan Hunter, Beth Jaker, Barbara O'Dair and Abby Tallmer, editors, design by Hannah Alderfer, Beth Jaker and Marybeth Nelson, published by Caught Looking, Inc., 1987. Available from: 135 Rivingston Street, New York, NY 10002. $12.00 post-paid.

***Caught Looking* is a retrospective of seven years in the feminist sex wars:** Ten essays and a multitude of photographs that portray the fiery debate within the women's movement over the question of dirty words and pictures. The authors featured in *Caught Looking* are some of the most articulate and persuasive proponents of erotica ever published as well as valiant enemies of censorship.

Caught Looking's most astounding aspect is not the articles it contains, but rather the amazing collection of pornography they've printed. As a picture-book, *Caught Looking* covers the entire 20th century, with every type of gender, fetish, and old-fashioned getting down and doing it rarely seen under one cover. Imagine French postcards from the '20s depicting lesbians playing with handmade dildoes, or *Midnight Cowboy* era gay boys. Bondage from the '50s casts a whole new light on the Eisenhower era.

The subtitle for this collection could easily have been "There is Nothing New Under the Sun." An underground sexual bohemia has always existed. Perhaps most thrilling from a female point of view is that we can see from the gleam in these vintage models' eyes that there have always been women who knew that sex wasn't about making babies.

The diversity of the photographs presented is thanks to the hard work and vision of the designers (Alderfer, Jaker and Nelson), who plunged into a literal twilight world of eccentric porno collectors and the hidden treasures of used bookstores.

They found a special treasure with one very modern-thinking and sympathetic art dealer named Joseph Vasta, who is responsible for most of the pre-1950s images. Some very fine work from *On Our Backs* is also reprinted in *Caught Looking,* from photographers Honey Lee Cottrell, Barbie Painter, Shari Cohen, and Morgan Gwenwald. The salacious and blatant showing-off that nearly all the photos contain is what clearly labels them as pornography. Porn is a word that has become a scourge for all that's wrong in the world, but in the case of this book, it's mandatory to perceive "pornography" as sexual expression, in order to appreciate its diversity and impact.

Most of the essays have been published previously, all the way back to 1979. In one of the few new pieces in the text, Abby Talmer and Barbara O'Dair do a brilliant list of "Sex Premises," which are untested ideas and rhetorical mandates about what sexuality is and isn't.

In a sample three "premises" from their list of 73, you'll find such gems as: *a pornographic image carries the same meaning to everyone who sees it, women do not objectify their partners; they naturally equate desire with romantic love,* or *no one who isn't against pornography truly opposes violence towards women.*

The 70 other premises are equally discussion-provoking and relentlessly satiric to all who have been oppressed by similar slogans.

Caught Looking's other writers represent a Who's Who of pro-sex intellectuals: Ann Snitow, Pat Califia, Nan Hunter, Paula Wester, Kate Ellis, Carole Vance and Ellen Willis. Just to give you a peek at the other side, there is also the complete text of the Minneapolis Anti-Pornography Ordinance, authored by Catherine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin.

All of the authors have written brilliant if slightly sectarian articles which have not previously reached the kind of readership they deserve. The sectarianism is, however, rather out of date, even nostalgic, because it focuses on addressing the anti-porn feminists' allegations. Nowadays, the anti-porn movement has been effectively taken over by the religious right wing, and they are a much larger and more dangerous opponent.

Feminist co-optation and resignation to the fundamentalists is exactly what anti-censorship critics predicted. We're in much more of a pickle in 1987 trying to fight the government and the courts, as opposed to shaming the average Dworkinite. Yes, we can still be pissed at them for diverting the precious little energy left in the women's movement to battle a paper tiger instead of fighting for women's self-determination. But we are faced today with a much more compelling problem. The American public, not Women Against Pornography, needs an erotic education, plus the political tools to come out of the closet about their lives as pornographic consumers and creators. If *Caught Looking* is read beyond the underground, it will be a powerful step towards an erotically literate community.

—Susie Bright

DYKES TO WATCH OUT FOR
Alison Bechdel, Firebrand Books, 1986

***Dykes to Watch Out For* is a collection of lesbian cartoons** and characters by Alison Bechdel. The New York-based artist has deft wit, a sharp eye and a sure hand, balanced by just the right amount of political correctness to keep everyone laughing. With the aid of a cross-section of characters, Bechdel explores common lesbian dating issues, like her twisted look at "The Joys of Couplehood" and a catalog of the sleeping habits of various overnight bunkmates in "Sleeping Beauts." Then there are those dykes we should watch out for. The Luppies (Lesbian Urban Professionals) for instance, are definitely not discussing romance when they talk about bond issues. You also can learn to identify specialized dyke subgroups in the Political and Literary Dyke classifications. (Did you know that the Tequila Nocturnalia species writes only at night?)

Each face in Dykes will remind you of a dyke that you've known or of a woman that you wondered about. The jokes are less than outrageous but they hit home. Highly recommended for your lesbian library.

—Andrea Lewis

A SENSE OF PRIDE: GAY GAMES II

Roy M. Coe, Pride Publications, 1986, Mail order available from: 2261 Market St., Suite 306-B, San Franciscoo, CA 94114, $14.95.

Any gay woman or man who picks up this book will be filled with the sense of pride that the title suggests. Author Roy M. Coe and principal photographer Scott McLennan have produced an inspirational scrapbook that captures the spirit and excitement of Gay Games II, its participants and its organizers, while chronicling the history of one of this country's largest gay enterprises. Coe profiles twenty athletes who competed in a variety of sports, from physique to billiards.

One of the most popular lesbian athletes at the Games was Betty Baxter, who recalls in her interview how she led the Canadian womens volleyball team to the 1976 Montreal Olympics. She coached the national women's team for two years before she was fired amid rumours of her lesbianism. "For me to come out of the straight sports world which had just walked over me...and then to see the Gay Games was an exhilirating event. First I was shafted for my sexuality, then found a whole city celebrating it!"

We can quickly see why the Games are unique, not just in terms of its participants, but also in the ideals on which they are founded. As Dr. Tom Waddell, who organized the idea of the Games explains it, the Gay Games "were conceived as a new idea in the meaning of sport, based upon inclusion rather than exclusion." Participants are judged as they were in the Olympics of ancient Greece: on the results of the competition and on the grace with which the event was performed. For those of us who have been confounded by the winner-take-all attitudes found in most modern sporting events, this ideal is both refreshing and welcome.

—Andrea Lewis

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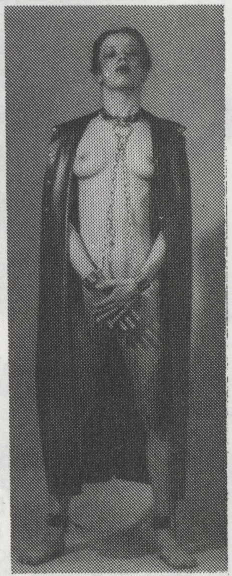

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CHECK UP *(continued from page 9)*

given. A pleasant female voice answered and set me up with an appointment for the following Monday. Sunday night rolled around and with it my imagination. What would she look like? What if it *were* a straight dentist preying on the gay community? I decided the last thought was downright paranoid and put my mind onto what I would wear. I could get no mental image from the unusual name so I decided to treat it like any other appointment. After all, it was a *dentist*! When had I ever come home smiling? This is no date--it's a cleaning and check-up. She just happens to be gay.

I dressed on Monday with special care to look good, wearing my grey pants with all the pockets and my favorite deep scarlet sweater. I nonchalantly threw my Lambda ring on and set out for the business district. Parking was a little rough, so I was breathless by the time I stepped off the elevator onto the seventh floor. My stomach was a little more jittery than usual. I checked the directory and quickly found 711-- Dr. Tamara Walker. I gathered all my strength and pulled the door open. The waiting area was comfortable yet tasteful. Easy chairs, dried flowers, oriental rugs: No muzak here, but Linda Tillery came through the speakers! A woman sat waiting and I realized she looked familiar. My ex-lover's ex-lover's ex-lover (but that's another story). We nodded and gave one another the sisterly once over.

The receptionist, who I recognized from a local women's music festival, introduced herself and handed me a general information card to fill out. I craned my neck hoping to catch a glimpse of the dentist, but her office was empty. Cris, the receptionist, told me "Tam" would be out in a minute. Five minutes passed. Well, the anticipation was worth the wait. Dr. Tam came strolling out, as only a confident lesbian can, with her hand extended. She was a little taller than me, maybe 5'6." Well-defined, athletic body. Her blonde hair was cut in a shaggy punk-dyke type cut. She had a great tan from over the summer. I imagined the freckles fading on her shoulders. But her eyes are what did me in. Vivid green with gold flecks and a laughing look to them. A small gold ear cuff with an emerald adorned her left ear. The small lines around her eyes told me she liked to laugh and was probably around 30 years old. Her hands were beautiful and capable looking. No nail polish and no rings. Her handshake was firm without putting me on my knees. I turned to putty. I mindlessly followed her to "the chair." It looked pretty inviting.

A crystal and a set of chimes hung in front of the window. She had a lavender telephone and a few stuffed animals on a shelf. Posters from the local women's center were on the wall. If she was striving for a homey environment she was successful. She tapped the center of my back and told me to "lie back and relax." I nervously told her I had dentalphobia. She firmly squeezed my shoulder, assuring me she was always gentle with first timers. Her husky, deliberate voice added to her charm. With a Ferron record playing in the background I decided to co-operate. After a couple of minutes of small talk she grew serious. "Well, let's see what you've got." I wet my lips and opened timidly for her. She gently pressed by chin and looked intently into my face. Had I ever seen eyes that captivating? "You look pretty good," she said.

I exhaled.

"I'd like to get a little deeper."

My legs turned to liquid and I felt my cheeks flush. I opened wider, keeping my eyes on her.

"Aaaaah," she cooed-- "That's really good, now keep relaxed." I regulated my breathing. My throat felt parched yet I held on.

"Hold on," she said as she adjusted the light. I weakly nodded, aware of the vague sensation that I feel in the early stages of sexual arousal.

"I need to go a bit deeper inside of you, then I'm going to rub just a little in the back. I feel some build-up, but I won't hurt." I opened a little wider to accommodate her probing. I felt both my mouths contract with her words and her activity. She moved in and out, up and down with precision. I stared at her. I had never allowed anyone to go that deeply or intensely without gasping.

Yet I trusted her. When I felt I could take no more she allowed me a drink of water. The cool water felt *great*. My throat was so dry. Tenderly she wiped my lips. I grabbed another sip of water and eagerly opened again for her. She continued with vigor, and experience flowered through her hands.

Circling deeper, deeper, paying attention to every inch, magnifying every touch! She smiled at me. Just as she was about to finish I gasped. She leaned over me to get some water. I could smell her musk and I felt her breast graze my arm. My nipples hardened. I closed my eyes. I never imagined anyone could feel this stimulated at a dentist's office! Tam stood back, examining me intently.

"Well, that should hold you for awhile. I'd like to see you sooner to prevent any unnecessary build-up."

I nodded weakly.

"We can prevent that with regular visits." She grinned that grin.

"Sure," I murmured, looking squarely at her. I felt clean and new and finished. I got my bearings and made an appointment for six months. I turned to leave the office and I spotted her slipping out of her white doctor's coat. She slid into a worn leather jacket, winked at me and turned to gather her belongings. I made it to the elevator somehow. I wonder ... do dentists make house calls?

OFF-COURT *(continued from page 9)*

besides, it's our secret."

I was stunned. That night I probably slept two hours.

The next afternoon I asked her if she really masturbated. That led us to share many secrets, ranging from masturbation experiences to menstruation to feelings about our bodies. We talked about everything but men! We talked like we had never talked before. From that time, almost on a daily basis, we would make all kinds of statements to each other pertaining to masturbation. I would ask if she had "gotten off" that day. She asked if I wanted to to go to sleep so I could "play with myself." We stared at each other in various stages of undress, allowing ourselves plenty of opportunities to exhibit our nude bodies to each other.

A few nights later, we accidentally brushed up against each other as we were preparing to go to bed. Somehow our lips met. It was a smack, but it was a kiss. Nothing was said, other than goodnight. The kiss intensified my thoughts of Lori, not only when I was masturbating but at all other times. I began to want more to happen between us, but I didn't know how to go about it.

As opening games of the season approached, we were caught up in intensive practices, as well as class matters. Our intimacy continued, with the joking, the stares and a nightly kiss on the mouth. Nothing more, except masturbating when we were alone.

The day before our first game had both of us edgy. Our practice was long and hard, but I was not exhausted enough to sleep when it came time to hit the sack. Lori surprised me by telling me to take a bath and "get myself off." Believe it or not, I did. But it didn't calm me down. I was as edgy and horny as ever, and I told her.

"Well, come here," she motioned. I stood in front of her, and she removed my panties. Then she stood up, pulled me to her, and kissed me hotly on the mouth. I was on my tiptoes, eagerly responding to her kisses and her arms holding me tightly against her. Lori undressed herself, then finished undressing me. It seemed like forever. She pulled me down on top of her on the bed. She opened her legs, allowing me to sink down firmly against her, my cunt pressing against hers. The wet kisses, our bodies together, the sensations from my clit and nipples overwhelmed me. It felt like I came for 30 minutes. My orgasms hit me like lightening bolts, explosions in my cunt. Lori got off as much if not more.

We spent the remainder of the night in bed, where we did much more exploration. The next day we won our first game handily, and went on to have a very successful season. We also had a very successful season in bed, only there wasn't any masturbating going on!

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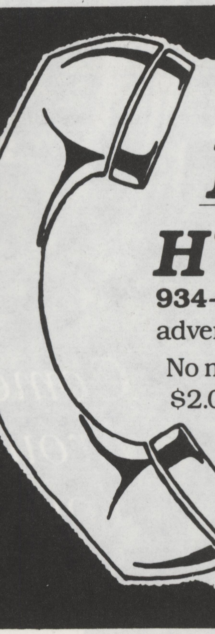

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INITIATION *(continued from page 31)*

They didn't see Jones again until lights-out, when the old pilot showed her his former bunk and waved them all a last goodbye. He had already had his going away party. Now it was time to welcome the new girl.

Gonzalez felt a special thrill to be initiating a girl for a change, for the first time since basic. Since Gonzalez's own initiation, which Sarge Shapiro took care of herself almost two years before, no woman had been transferred to the 97th. Initiating a guy was just as important, because it was the initiation that made him part of the unit, no longer a "new guy," but one of them. Gonzalez put her heart into it. But the way a guy did a guy didn't interest her. And she was sure as hell glad no guy had ever wanted her to initiate him. If it happened, she figured she'd grit her teeth, grease her arm and do right by the old 97th. But she hoped it never would.

Sarge Chiu came and told the platoon he was going to work them all like slaves tomorrow, ordered them to shut up, slammed the door of his cubicle, knowing damn well what they would do next. After the traditional half-hour, everyone reached for their flashlights, surrounded Jones's bunk in the dark, and turned a circle of lights on her. Gonzalez liked the cool way Jones sat up and reached for her shades. Only the briefest twitch of her straight little nose betrayed surprise. Gonzalez didn't know which turned her on more; maybe both did equally. Jones's tanktop showed nice arm muscles, nothing spectacular, but solid. Her breasts barely made the material rise.

Harless, the leader, talked for all twelve of them. "Okay, new girl," he said with an officer's superior tone, "Choose who initiates you to the 232-97th."

Jones didn't waste any time before pointing at Gonzalez. "Her," she said. Hope turned to certainty and Gonzalez grinned in anticipation.

Rezabek broke in as planned. "You better think again. You just want her 'cause you think she'll go easy on you. She's meaner than any two of us put together." He made it convincing, but Jones kept her cool.

Gonzalez turned to Rezabek and jeered, "You guys think I'm mean 'cause I know what a woman can take. You guys throw a half-ass fuck into a woman, she still has to beat off when you finish."

They all turned to see Jones's reaction.

"Well, new girl?" Harless demanded, looking tall and authoritative with the flashlights lighting his face from below, throwing his broad features into relief.

"Her," Jones repeated with certainty, looking right at Gonzalez, her thin lips firm, chin up, arms crossed. She had an unremarkable middle-range voice, not very loud, but it carried conviction.

Gonzalez fairly leapt into the middle of the circle. She knew she looked good, black hair slicked back, muscles bulging, skin glowing brown and warm in the dim light. She knew she had a way with women. She clasped one arm around Jones's back, grasped another another into her short, mousy-brown hair, bent her over and kissed her hard. Their breasts crushed together. Even with their closed mouths meeting dry, Gonzalez's heart raced at the touch of a woman, the warmth of Jones's mouth under hers.

Then she sat up straight. "Lights out," she growled. A couple of guys started to object. She squared her shoulders and silenced them with a glare. "I'll let you know when she's initiated," she said.

"Out," Harless insisted, backing her up. He and Rezabek, asshole buddies from way back, turned their lights off, Rezabek grinning. The rest followed within seconds, and stomped back to their bunks, alone or in pairs. Brown muttered, "Another fucking dyke."

"Fuck you, man," Gonzalez automatically countered.

"Any time," Brown offered.

"Not a chance," Gonzalez laughed, and turned to Jones. She couldn't see her anymore, but their hands lingered on each other's sides. She bent over Jones. "Welcome to the 97th," she whispered and they kissed again, lips soft and searching, hungry and grateful. It was like coming alive, coming home. Gonzalez had hoped for a woman, any woman. Jones met her eagerly, letting her know this was more than just a woman, this was a hot one.

Jones expertly kicked her blanket away, so the bare skin of their legs could rub together. Gonzalez dove a hand under Jones's tanktop, impatient for abs, lats, pecs, breasts. Jones's strong hand found Gonzalez's hip, her tight flat little butt. Their legs, their mouths pressed hard together. Gonzalez tried to roll herself on top. Jones, apparently more used to warehouse floors than bunks, took it for a wrestling move and, resisting, tried to flip Gonzalez off. They landed on the floor.

"Hey, Gonzalez," Harless called, "you're supposed to initiate her, not kill her." Everybody laughed.

"Shut up," Gonzalez muttered, and asked Jones, "You okay, baby?"

"Sure. I took most of it on my butt."

"Where'd you like to take it, huh?" Gonzalez had caught herself with her arms and managed not to land on Jones. "Where'd you learn to fuck anyway? In a barn?"

"In a hangar, dipshit," Jones answered good-naturedly.

"Get back to work, Gonzalez," Wozniac interrupted. "The honor of the 97th rests on you."

"Cool it, man," she called back. "I never flake out on nobody." She settled down next to Jones, fitting next to her in the dark. They zeroed in like ships operating on infrared, as hot for each other as before. Gonzalez found and kissed Jones's neck, sucking the soft flesh between her teeth, wondering if Jones marked easily, like some white girls did. Jones moaned softly and clutched her. Gonzalez liked that. Appreciation.

They lay on their sides, Gonzalez a little on top of Jones, pushing her shirt straps out of the way for more bites down her shoulders towards the tops of her small breasts. Finally Gonzalez felt Jones roll onto her back with an abandoned gesture. She loved getting a woman ready and then giving her what she wanted exactly when she wanted it. It made a small sun glow in the pit of her stomach and her underwear stick to her wet crotch. She knelt over Jones and pulled off her undershirt, lingering to cup her breasts, to squeeze the nipples, then bending to taste the moan on her lips. Gonzalez wished she could see Jones's face, but settled for stroking her downy, sweaty cheek. She lay full length over Jones, kissing her again and again, while their cunts and thighs ground together. Finally she pulled off her own undershirt, then kissed down on Jones again, savoring the smell and feel of a woman's breasts and belly, Jones's ragged breathing, the way her hands pressed hard on Gonzalez's shoulders. Gonzalez reached down and stroked up Jones's thighs, down her belly, inside her tight standard-issue shorts. Jones gasped and shuddered when Gonzalez found her clit. When Gonzalez slid first one finger, then two, in and out of her cunt, her thigh trembled under Gonzalez's other hand. Time to drive home.

"Ready for some initiating, baby?" Gonzalez whispered huskily. She didn't like to make hearing easy for the guys.

"You bet," Jones answered with a little tremor in her voice. It drove Gonzalez wild. She practically tore Jones's shorts off, and knelt between her legs, feeling the cockeyed way they were spread with each knee pointing a different direction. Gonzalez worked her hand slowly into Jones, two fingers, three, four. Each time she pressed a little further, Jones moaned with an exquisite rising edge in her voice. Gonzalez wished she could see that tight little mouth. Did it stretch and tighten in rhythm with Jones's cunt? "Come on, baby, take it," she coaxed, pushing in, easing off, pushing back in when Jones loosened up, keeping the pressure steady until resistance dissolved.

"Get her, Gonzalez," Brown called, and Rezabek started a running narration: "Zeroing in ... Locked on target ... Ready to dock ... Docking accomplished!" He triumphantly hit the nail on the head as Jones took Gonzalez's thumb and knuckle with a resounding groan and a bucking tilt that nearly broke Gonzalez's wrist.

"This I gotta see!" Wozniac hollered.

"Not if you want to see daylight again, man," Gonzalez warned. No light went on. Her voice told them all

(continued on page 43)

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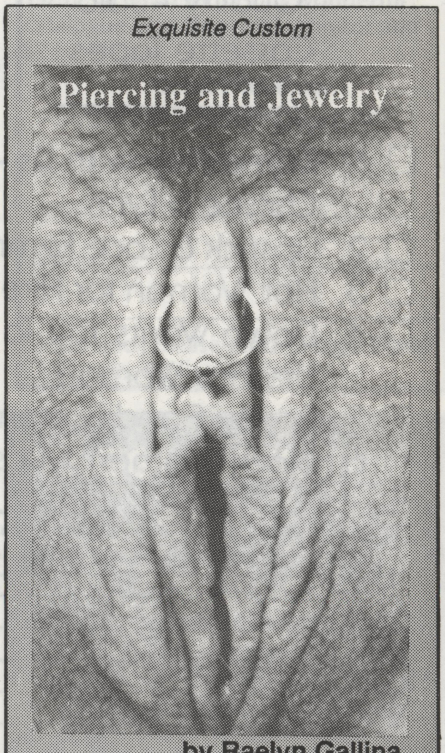
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ICE *continued from page 24*

inequality, homophobia, childcare, self respect or sisterhood: They think about pornography! Talk about being sold out....

When the sexism-is-porn believer sees a controversial lesbian magazine like *On Our Backs* that has an article about sex where someone says, "god, I love to be whipped," or "I like to have my hair pulled when I'm coming," they just compare that immediately to the mainstream sexism that they're surrounded by. But the point is that they are looking at a lesbian image created for a lesbian audience, which is so radical that many viewers find their "objectification-is-sexism" approach seriously challenged. The so-called object is in the eye of the beholder. It IS possible to interpret the message on an identification level. That is, seeing and hearing lesbians portray their own sexuality for a change.

Another thing Tasha asks is why more lesbians can talk about S/M but not pornography. She implies that s/m is a more broachable subject than porn, because it seems less real, less tangible, in the daily lives of lesbians than porn, or perhaps more. If we talk about lesbian s/m we don't have to deal with our anger and fear about men.

DS: We are just beginning to talk about porn because until three years ago, lesbians had virtually none. The lesbian S/M movement is ten years old and has had time to create a language out of its meaning and experience in lesbian lives. As Tasha pointed out, the discussions and experiments around porn are now beginning and are impatient to get to the point– what our fantasies and experiences are and what they mean to us from our decidedly woman-centered lesbian perspective.

On the other hand, there's been a ten-year history of lesbian s/m. S/M dykes have developed a language; they've examined their sexuality and created a whole new context of images and conversation for it. Women haven't done that with porn. They've been bombarded with the anti-porn crap, and sexual guilt. By discussing what's wrong with men's porn, we have completely neglected talking about our own sexual imagery, deveoping our own erotic language.

SB: What do you mean by our own erotic language? Are you talking about changing how we spell words, or what?

DS: It's the language of our personal experience. It's also a language of understanding. There aren't any easy answers. That's what consciousness-raising groups are all about. That's the nature of the struggle. And why do we struggle? Because we know we are onto something fundamentally important to our lives.

INITIATION *(continued from page 41)*

she meant it. It wasn't for no man to see no woman getting fucked by a woman.

Gonzalez carefully lowered her mouth to Jones's hard little clit, which pushed its way through a jungle of sticky hair, hot and smooth. She stayed only for a short, sweet kiss, a hint of other times to come, then started moving her hand in a steady, practiced push-pull.

Gonzalez was a good initiator. She could even make a virgin like taking it. And once she was in, she knew how to rotate her wrist to bring the hard part of the thumb against a woman's G-spot each time. Each thrust made Jones gasp and moan a little deeper, a little louder, so regularly Harless started counting and all the other guys joined him. Gonzalez muttered that she would kill them all, but it didn't mean much. The fire was in her and Jones. The guys were just warming their hands.

When Jones came, it was with an arch that brought her pubic bone down on Gonzalez's wrist again and with a scream that left no one any doubt. Gonzalez pushed on Jones's abdomen to set her right and kept moving, a little slower now, to coax the last few tremors out of her. When Jones's hot wet cunt, her trembling legs, her ballooned out belly relaxed under Gonzalez's soft touch, Gonzalez announced, "Guys, I think we got ourselves a new pilot."

While the guys cheered, Gonzalez slowly slid her hand out of the now immobile woman before her, stopped to caress the sweet little clit, and wiped her hands on her shorts. Then she made a disgusted face and took them off. Fuck wet underwear anyway. She lay down next to Jones, propped up on one elbow, one arm around her. Jones lay absolutely still and limp, as if her joints had all dissolved. Gonzalez stroked her torso, listening to her breathing slow down. She noticed Jones was still wearing her shades. It made Gonzalez want to laugh, like the unconscious way her nose wrinkled, the cockeyed way she spread her legs. It was funny as hell and Gonzalez liked it.

Finally Jones stirred, turning a little towards Gonzalez. They were on their own now, their duty to the outfit done. Most of the guys would fall asleep now, like Gonzalez did after a guy's initiation. She hoped Jones wouldn't call it quits.

"It's been a long time for me," she said cautiously. "I'm glad you're here."

Jones drew Gonzalez down with arms suddenly strong again and kissed her long and deep. Gonzalez's heart leapt. This really was a hot one.

"Your bunk or mine?" Gonzalez whispered urgently.

"Mine's closer," Jones said, matter-of-fact but eager. Leaving the blanket and their clothes on the floor, they climbed up and twined their arms and legs together.

"Nice muscles," Jones said, feeling Gonzalez's deltoids.

"I work out every day," Gonzalez answered, rubbing Jones's round firm butt. They explored each other and kissed slowly. Gonzalez liked it that Jones liked to kiss. Some girls got tired of it, but not this one. In fact, Jones liked to kiss so much she kissed clear down Gonzalez's body, lying close beside her on the short narrow bunk, working her way to Gonzalez's clit.

"Shit goddamn," Gonzalez breathed.

"Now Gonzalez is getting it," Wozniac piped up.

"Jealous, Wozniac?" Gonzalez shot back.

"Jesus Fucking Christ," Brown broke in, "don't you whores ever quit? How's a fella supposed to get any sleep around here?"

"Count sheep," Gonzalez suggested sarcastically, then lost interest as Jones found a new way to vibrate her clit. "Goddamn, you're good, baby," she grunted. It was true. Gonzalez was hot enough to come from anyone besides herself touching her down there, but Jones knew what she was doing. Gonzalez tilted her hips, pushing her clit against Jones's mouth. When Jones slipped a finger into her, she couldn't wait any longer. She uttered a string of soft Spanish curses and heat waves spread from her cunt clear up to her face and down to her feet.

"Goddamn, baby, you're good," she repeated as Jones's head settled on her shoulder. It felt so good to have a woman next to her, sexy and sweaty and smelling of cunt. She lay still and revelled in it, then hugged Jones close, waking her up, and settled Jones down again, and finally went to sleep herself, one arm and one leg thrown over Jones, breathing the female smell that lingered on her.

When reveille blew at 4:30, Sarge Chiu stalked into the barracks as usual, shouting, "All right, what are you waiting for, you bums! Get the lead out! That includes you lovebirds!"

Gonzalez jerked awake to Wozniac's "Not till I get my camera!"

"Fuck that!" Gonzalez hollered and sat bolt upright, groping around for some clothes. They were all lost under the bunk. "Shit," she muttered, standing up, and strode towards the showers. Then she remembered and turned around to finally see Jones, with her know-it-all little smile spreading up her round face and creasing the sides of her nose, with her broad shoulders, her slight firm breasts and powerful legs, her body starred with small fresh bites. She reached lazily for her shades, put them on and lay back, still stark naked, still smiling at Gonzalez. What the hell, Gonzalez thought smiling back. Wozniac didn't even have a camera. She could fight with him later. This was the start of something good.

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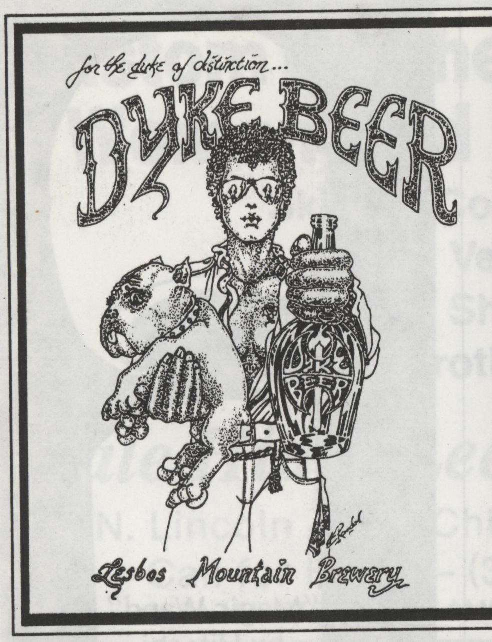

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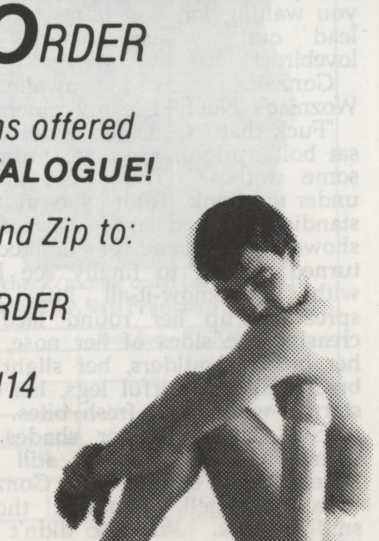

WARMING UP *(continued from page 23)*

likes, needs, wants or fantasies are not so outrageous, they are no longer scary, and we can talk about them with eachother. If this had been done at the beginning of the conference for the whole group, I believe all of the workshops would have included much more open discussion from the beginning. In addition, they established rules, namely confidentiality, respect and suspended judgment. By taking personal risks in trusting these rules, other participants loosened up, too.

There is a lot of fear around talking about what we do in bed. Perhaps because the more we divulge, the more likely questions will come up such as "Is this S/M?", "Is this a male-identified activity?", "Is this sexually ethical?,", or "Is this politically correct?". As long as we talk in theoretical or vague terms we don't have to address these questions regarding our own sexual practices. Setting ground rules, as in the Pleasures workshop, can help us to move on in these discussions. Perhaps also we are trapped by our fear of our own bodies, our own needs and fantasies, thinking them too "immoral" or outrageous. Also our fear of sexual power, that it may be too powerful or not powerful enough. This is where the tactic of presenting the outrageous can help alleviate shyness.

Commonly, women respond sexually to situations of sexual/power imbalance, for example, having a crush on someone who is straight, or staying with someone who is not as into the relationship as we are. In the workshop Eroticizing Equality, we discussed the possiblilty of the creation of erotica which represents an equal situation. Some women defined "unequal" erotica as that which objectifies the women (or woman), that which shows a visible domination and power differential, implying but not naming images of S/M. My main objection to this, was that particularly with visual images of more than one woman having sex, presumably there will always be someone DOING and someone having it done to her. By the same token, even if there is only one woman, an erotic image does indeed objectify her, because we do not know her as a person, but as part of an image. Is it in fact POSSIBLE to create an erotic image that is equal?

We also discussed the difficulty with the notion of putting the erotic into an equal relationship, particularly if we are women who seem to respond best sexually to power impalance. Those of us struggling with this agreed that the key was taking advantage of the high levels of trust and open and free communication. This can lead to sex which is risk-taking, new, and hopefully hotter and more exciting. In fact, taken a step further, once there is complete trust and openness, sexual activities which seem to rely on a power differential, such as fistfucking or bondage, no longer are imbalanced and the excitement and passion ride on the power each lover creates within herself and with her lover. The sexual act (or its image) has no implication in and of itself without its context, or social interpretation of it. Therefore, if we create our own context for it, we have created its true meaning.

Did we, in the Eroticizing Equality workshop, discuss pornography and lesbian S/M without naming them? In particular, lesbian S/M was talked about in every workshop I attended without being named. A common objection to bringing it up is that it is very controversial and deflects the discussion from what "most" of us do in bed. But it is a big part of lesbian sexuality, whether or not we identify as S/M dykes, because it is part of our culture, and though unrecognized, our sexual history. S/M dykes have taken the risks and made progress in talking about sex, explicitly; discussing the power dynamics, trust levels and safety needs which are present in all our sex lives, no matter what we actually do.

Though there are those women who will absolutely not discuss S/M, merely oppose it, I have found it a more broachable topic than porn. Women will talk more easily about their own sexual experiences with S/M than they will talk about explicit, arousing sexual imagery. Why do we seem to be able to talk productively about S/M and not about pornography? Our language for talking about porn seems to be limited to words of pain and anger. To discuss titillation or positive erotica is too unapproachable in the midst of a discussion of anger and fear. Is it because it seems less real, less tangible and the daily lives of women than porn, or perhaps more? Maybe since we tend to talk about *lesbian* S/M only, on some level, we don't have to deal with our anger and fear about men. Perhaps, as my friend Karen Lefkovitz said, the more we talk about women's bodies, especially women's sexuality, the more we come up with a world view that is women centered. The anti-porn dialectic offered to us is devoid of insight into discovery of our active and positive sexual selves, as opposed to sexual fears and problems, making it increasingly difficult to discuss one's goal of actually exploring our sexuality. When we are trying to talk about what we do in bed and someone evokes the language of the anti-porn movement,the conversation silenced. We are afraid that our actions will be judged to be degrading or oppressive. Yet we discuss the dynamics of S/M, albeit without naming it sometimes, because it reflects the dynamics in all our sex lives.

A classic example was presented at two talks last spring in Washington, D.C.: one on lesbian S/M by a member of the Lesbian Sex Mafia, the other a debate between a Feminist Against Pornography representative and an ACLU anti-censorship person. The LSM women talked about her sexual experience, and through an exercise drew our own sexual experience into our analysis. She handed out an S/M hankerchief code, which listed different sexual acts that correspond with different colored hankies. Even though the hanky code is a product of S/M culture, many of the activities listed represent very common lesbian sex practices: oral sex, fist fucking, finger fucking, cunnilingis during menstruation, anal sex, etc. She told humorous and frank stories about the sexual acts listed and polled the women in group: Have you done this? How about this? It was a simple exercise that instantly loosened up the audience and provided an outlet to speak about our individual sex lives. While many women in the audience were not convinced of her point that S/M is an acceptable sexual preference, my feeling was that something had been created. She created an image of herself and other women as sexually positive, creative, conscious and free-choosing individuals, which is a difficult notion to judge negatively.

The anti-porn woman talked only about statistics, violent incidents and passed out images of racist, violent pornography. She said she did not oppose eroticia, but had none to show. She could not, to my satisfaction, define erotica or pornography. In fact, she created nothing, only drew upon our emotional reactions to violent, racist and anti-female images.

We were invited to react against, whereas the LSM women invited us to act towards something. We seem to be able to talk about S/M because we have the language to discuss it, namely the language of our own sexual experience, our experiences of power, trust and titillation.

We focus on "porn" as a source of negative energy around our sexuality. We try to eliminate it by defining it, which we cannot do until we understand it, which requires creating our own language for porn. Yet in treatment of porn, we do not seem to be able to discuss our own sexuality. Wouldn't it be much more effective to counter misogyny with philogyny, (fondness for women)? We must love ourselves, our sexual selves, which means understand them, please them, and grow with them. We must talk about sex.

Susan Cole said, in the beginning of her Toronto workshop on Eroticizing Equality, that she began to look at erotica, or porn, coming out of a strong anti-porn opinion, because she found much of it turned her on. I was intrigued by lesbian S/M, though I was predisposed to think of it unacceptable, because it also turned me on. The point where we begin to discuss our bodies is the point where our analysis becomes women centered. I'm just getting warmed up.

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CRUEL *(continued from page 19)*

the floor. She washed the Priscilla make-up off her face and put on her real make-up, took off her orange heart-shaped earrings and put on a nice shirt and nice pants. Then she went to tell that girl where to get off. I watched them go at it for awhile. Ms. Leather was squirming, trying to get the hell out of there, but Pris kept lashing away, not letting up for a second. I could see from her face that everything was all rat-atat-tat. Something about it was exciting to me. If you waited for the right moment, you could eventually get revenge. That's when I started thinking that I might have a dress-up fetish. But, she wasn't really Priscilla Presley and that was that.

By the time Ms. Leather had crawled home, Pris tapped me on the shoulder and I ended up back in the snow.

"This is a worthless winter," I said. "It doesn't give you anything. Not quiet, not stopping traffic, not everything white. Nothing."

Pris didn't have proper winter boots, so her feet must have been sopping in those thin things with the spiked heels. Still, she enjoyed the sky full of snow, her face shining in the streetlight.

"Dolores walked out on me," I told her.

"Let me guess," she said with a Miss Thing tone in her voice. "She hurt you real bad and all you need is someone to take you home and make you feel better."

"I didn't say that."

"You didn't have to." She was clapping her hands, catching the snow. "I'm little and I'm cute and enough women have told me that's *all* they want and that's *all* anybody wants."

"You want a beer?" I asked, because I wanted one myself.

"Buy me a slice," she said, leading me to a pizza parlor run by stoned Arabs with big grins. It was yellow plastic, too much light, with posters of Yemen and grease-stained wax paper everywhere. Under Pris's leather gloves were five long and polished nails on her right hand and three long, polished nails on her left. The index and middle were cut, not chewed, to the cuticle.

"Southpaw?"

"I'm a left-handed lover," she said thoughtfully, holding her hand up to the florescent light. "When they grow too long, it's depressing since I don't like to do without. But don't get me wrong. I do believe in love." She had a dreamy teenaged smile on her face. "Want to know what I know?"

"Sure." My voice came out like rancid butter.

"Okay, here is Priscilla Presley's philosophy of lesbian love. First, mistresses are fine, but when it gets too serious there's only room for one at a time. Two, it's got to be as over in your head as it is on paper. Three, everybody needs time between affairs to remember who they are. See how easy life can be?"

"But Dolores left me," I said.

"Yeah, but she's still got you by the balls."

She picked the cheese off her pizza with those cherry red nails, the grease dripping all over the floor.

"You're an old gay aren't you Pris? You believe in honor."

"I've never let a man touch me," she said. "And plenty have tried. I take myself very seriously."

I went next door to get a beer and picked up one for her too. Priscilla was some kind of angel, with an important message. I had a question to ask her. It was, "Is love always worth it?" But by the time I got back, she was gone. Only she'd left her little black purse, sitting there lonely like me, on a yellow bucket seat. Inside was her address book, and a gun.

It took me three days to get up the courage to go over to Priscilla's. She let me in and left me waiting in the living room while she got comfortable. There was a bottle of good vodka and a 1940s ice bucket with long stemmed art deco glasses, pink. Everything was something. Nothing was regular. It couldn't be just a chair, it had to be tacky or exquisite or a great find. There were too many details, like coasters from various world's fairs and ice tongs from here and there and an overload of truckstop ashtrays. But, bless her heart, when that little dollface stepped out of the bedroom, she was all dressed up just for me, in her gown and panty-girdle and even that black fall. She put on rhumba records and we danced around laughing and drinking from the bottle in between sloppy kisses. Then Elvis sang, "Wise men say, even fools fall in love."

That's when I murmured, "Don't be cruel."

I fell on my knees at Priscilla's feet, burying my face in her polyester crotch. I rubbed my whole body in it. Polyester was my everything. I chewed on her girdle and she tightened the grip of tulle around my neck.

"I'm a terrible lover," I said, tonguing her thigh. "I'm the worst. You can still get out of it."

"I know you stink," she said, scratching her eight long nails down my back. "As long as I know the truth, let's just do it."

Pris tore off her Platex and pushed her cunt in and out of my face. My tongue was going a mile a minute as she locked my head between her legs. It wasn't until I had three fingers up her asshole that she started riding me like a bucking bronco and her cum was dripping all down my neck. Priscilla Presley was not shy when it came to getting what she wanted. But then she got all soft and dewey-eyed, which was a big surprise. That's when it hit me that Pris could be tough but then give her heart right away. That's why she needed to carry a gun.

"Pris, do me a favor. Take your gun back."

"Why thank you honey, but I have plenty. Why don't you just keep it?"

"Priscilla, tell me, why did you start collecting firearms?"

She lay back to answer that one. Her breasts stuck up right into the air.

"Years ago when I was very young, I had a girlfriend who worked as a hooker. There were always creepy men coming around and demanding things and she was very tough with them, but sweet with me, really sweet. I was a lazy lover then and she did everything. One night we were making love at her place. Her mouth was full of my breasts. We were sitting together on a rocking chair and suddenly she stopped everything, right in the middle. I mean, both our faces were flushed red. When you're that turned on the air is sparking, everything could burn. So her pause had this magical effect. I understood perfectly not to say or do anything. She picked up her gun and stood naked, with those sunshine stretch marks girls get from making babies, gleaming like gold leaf in an old book. She pulled open the curtain and a man was standing there jerking off. His dick was flopping around in his hand. I remember the steel of her gun and the precious metal on her stomach. And I remember his expression, knowing she would blow his balls off. But she didn't. She forgave him. He left her alone after that, knowing she'd kill him for sure the next time.

"Get tough, Cookie," she told me. "Get a gun."

"That's a great story, Priscilla."

"I've got a lot more," she said. "If we're ever in a car for a long drive with no radio, I'll tell you six or seven."

"Do you really think I need a gun?"

"Well," she said, dropping the accent, washing her face in the kitchen sink and looking like a normal girl again. "Look, I'm going to give it to you straight-up. If you're nice, people think you're a sap. Give it back! Show them how much you hate them. It's the only thing they understand."

"Yeah, but that's how people get killed."

"Oh, don't be such a pansy," she said, brushing her hair. She said it so carelessly that it tossed off her head with a stroke of her brush. I saw a fire inside her that cleansed her skin. It burned through any make-up. That's when I realized that I wanted to believe in peace and love. I wanted to watch a crow fly across a country sky on a snowy day. I wanted to sit with a lover in a big house in over-sized sweaters drinking tea and listening to Javanese music. I wanted to ride a horse and when it galloped, I would start coming and when it stopped, I would keep coming. I wanted to be the horse.

"You're sweet," she said, kissing me. "Maybe we'll do this again sometime."

"Peace and love, Pris," I said, walking out the door. And oh God, I really meant it.

TOYS *continued from page 6*

What are *Ben Was*, really? They are gold plated metal balls, a little bigger than marbles, which are inserted in a woman's vagina like a tampon. Now if you get excited wearing a tampon, you'll love *BenWa balls*. The balls do *not* hop around like Mexican jumping beans of their own volition. Your vagina is a potential space that only opens to accommodate what is inserted; it's not a hole to play ping pong in. Unless the muscles contract, the balls will not move. It's a little interesting to discover how and when your muscles do contract. Of course they move when a woman orgasms, but the vagina also flexes when you cough, sneeze, or belly laugh. My first experience with *Ben Was* was one day I put them in, forgot all about them (since naturally I didn't feel anything), and then later in a restaurant over dinner, I laughed at my date's joke and this little ball came shooting down my thigh, rolling out the leg of my Levis. I'll never forget that, will I? *Ben Was* will also go off at airport security checkpoints, and don't think it hasn't happened before. Some women, I would say all of them straight, are interested in *Ben Was* to exercise and tighten their vaginal muscles, usually because their husband has told them that their pussy isn't what it used to be. (Frankly, I think these husbands just want to get fucked in the ass and are too uptight to admit it.) Do lesbians ever feel badly about this issue? I've heard gossip where dykes will claim that Ms. So 'n' So can take on two fists at the same time, but it's all related in good humor. The fact is that if you want to strengthen what is called the pubococcyx muscles, there is a simple motion of squeezing and releasing them, just as if you were stopping and starting the flow of urine, that will improve your muscle tone rapidly. If you want to make the exercise more pleasureable, have an orgasm—that's the best workout your p.c. muscles will ever have.

I will admit that I have one friend who says she had fun with *Ben Wa Balls* while she was nursing her newborn in a rocking chair. I believe the breast suckling had more than a little to do with her happy sensations.

I still say, "Boycott *Ben Was*." They may look innocent but they represent a lack of sensitivity to womens' bodies and sexual responses by sex toy makers.

You may wonder whether a small pressure group of adventurous lesbians can have the slightest effect on the sex industry. I have recently been made aware of a new line of battery vibrators which come in pink, lime, yellow, and ...lavender. (Available through *Good Vibrations*, but distributed through a national wholesaler called *Product Promotions*—your local toy shop can easily order them). We may be the mouse, but I believe they have heard our roar.

Contributors

Tasha Belifore is a wildlife biologist and avid participant to lesbian and feminist culture. Her primary commitments are to fighting racism and creating a language for lesbian sexuality, art and internationalism. **Anne Doering** is the designer of a line of greeting cards and an illustrator of short stories. **Andrea Lewis** is a writer, vocalist and activist in San Francisco. **Gon Buurman** is a 48 year old native of Holland. She lives and works in Amsterdam as a freelance photographer and has been published in Holland, Germany, Belgium and the U.S. **Anne Marie Brown** wrote "First Time" for our Summer '86 issue, and continues to delight us with more of her nostalgic erotica. **Anne Appel**, honorable mention winner of the 1986 Erotic Lesbian Photo Awars, has a difficult time keeping her clothes on when she's alone with a camera. Some would call it a fetish. **Raven Crone** is a black lesbian with four children and a Doctorate of Divinity. She lectures on radio and college campuses. **Elizabeth Pincus** is an ex-San Franciscan now on the lam in Nashville, Tennessee. She believes in truck-stops, radical feminism, Kitty Wells and compassion. **Armistead Maupin** is the American gay storyteller of our time. His saga, *Tales of the the City*, has been treasured by readers everywhere, especially in his hometown of San Francisco. "Dede, the Dancing Cop" is excerpted from his upcoming novel, *Significant Others*. **Sarita Johnson** is a regular illustrator for *On Our Backs*. We send her all our wildest and weirdest stories. **Sarah Schulman** is the author of *Girls Visions and Everything* and *The Sophie Horowitz Story*. "Don't Be Cruel" is an excerpt from her upcoming novel, *After Delores*. **Penny Jerome** moved to Moscow, Idaho after four boring years defending our country against the communist threat. Her three obsessions are photography, women and new music. She owns seven black t-shirts and has a six foot Godzilla installed in her living room. **Elfi Mikesch** is a West German filmmaker whose film *Seduction: The Cruel Woman* (with collaborator Monika Treut) has been a hit in the North American gay film festivals. Stills from their recent work, *Haut un Haut*, was published in the Fall '86 issue of *On Our Backs*. **Barbie Painter** stalks New York City in search of hot, willing talent. She has been published in *On Our Backs, The Village Voice, The Body Politic, Caught Looking* and the *N.Y. Native*. **Patti Levey** moved to San Francisco from New York three years ago. Her self-portraits have been an ongoing expression of spirit and self as well as sexuality. **Christopher Rollins** is a Bay Area photgrapher and former merchant marine who has photgraphed people throughout the world. He still believes life is full of surprises. **Rebecca Ripley** is the pseudonym of a permenently civilian 37 year old Jewish madwoman who doesn't recommend that anyone join any branch of the armed forces. **Robyn Weissman** is a 25 year old writer living and lusting in Maryland . Her "Check-Up" story attests to three things: the erotic power of language, the author's runaway imagination, and that anything can be an adventure! **Diana Duff** is a teacher and student of photography and spiritual arts in the Bay Area. Her fascination with the erotic, outrageous and incongruous as well as the ordinary aspects of life are all explored in her work. **Goldie River's** photograph is part of a series she submitted to the 1986 Erotic Lesbian Photo Contest, in which this moody portrait won an honorable mention.

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BEAUTIFUL BOSTON SCORPIO

Dark, good-looking marshmallow butch with unpredictable mean streak yearning for luscious femme who's not afraid to show she likes it. It's been a long time since someone clawed my back and I miss it. I'm 33, an ex-hippie turned jock/construction worker. Very strong and sweet. Come on, honey, write. Box 211.

DALLAS DYKE-OTOMY

Can you handle it? I'm a great looking soft butch with an immense capacity for nurturing and sensitivity. I'm a ravenous nympho who can make the heights of ecstacy yours without sacrificing your dignity. I'm an athlete with a body of chiselled steel, and a heart of pure gold. I'm a fun loving woman with a formidable intellect. I'm someone who is waiting patiently to hear from you. Please Write. Box 290.

CALIF. LADY WANTS YOU!

27 year old white lesbian loves music, dancing, warm weather, walks on the ocean, oriental food, long talks, good books, and white women. I live in Santa Barbara, and make frequent trips to LA and Orange County. Sound good? Please write to Jennifer, Box 289.

PUNK ROCK

Punk Dyke interested in corresponding with other Punk Dykes everywhere (possible meeting). Want to share our music and punk culture. Favorite music: Husker Du, Sonic Youth, and The Smiths. I'm also interested in forming a punk dyke band, so we could blow the doors off the women's music scene. Box 218.

SOUTHERN FLOWER

Recent transplant from Atlanta to San Diego, interested in hearing from women 24-34. Let's linger over conversation and breakfast, savor activities in the sun or warm up cool California nights. Box 293.

WANTED: TOPS AND BOTTOMS

to provide personal insights and experiences for documentary on the positive aspects of Lesbian S/M. Will accept anonymous submissions but am looking for an "out" woman to be both quoted and filmed. Box 287.

STILETTOS FOR TWO

Only if you're gorgeous, ultra femme, Lesbian, submissive, bottom, sober, single, deep and conveniently located in western New England can you qualify for the bed of the best situated, most handsome, mannish, top dominant dyke. Anything other than six-inch stilettoes (mine steel, sharp and pointed at you; yours fashionably on your feet). Love...pay attention, love, intense SM sex and an ownership relationship — anything less is too far beneath me to bother with. Do something seductively servile if you dare provoke my masterful attention. Box 267.

23-YEAR-OLD SUBMISSIVE

Femme, waist-length brown hair, pretty, 125 lbs, not real smart, wants to meet dominant women, single or couple, who would use me the way they like. I like being told what to do and how to do it. Photo, phone or cassette. Everyone answered. Box 268.

To P., SADIST AND BEAUTIFUL POET, NYC

Are you living with a new slave? Is she very pretty?? Does she speak, write, and make love with a French accent (like you know who)? Does she always listen to you? Like, I mean, does she always finish eating her green peas? Does she ever shut up? How often do you whip her? Does she like it or does she just need it?? Please, at least tell me her first name. I regret our recent little falling out, it's giving me a major headache; it was all my fault, but you must have known I was fighting only myself. (Also, I like to shock people.) And oh yes, I should tell you, I rewrote my "Book II" because you were right about it. Understand me? PS: I want to send you a special lady's whip which I made for you; will you give me a safe address? Love and devotion, Linda "Crazy Kat" Me, in Toronto. Box 266.

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two lesbians?

2. Answer:

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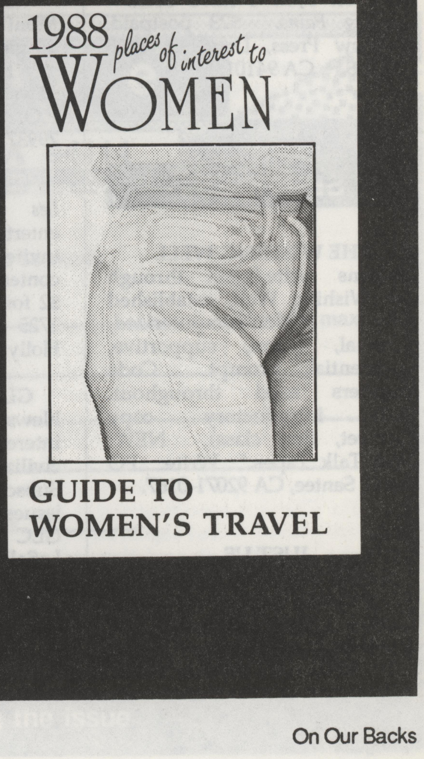


TAKE CHARGE

Take charge woman wants to be taken charge of. Hot and sexy in business suits, leather or lace. Submissive into B/D, S/M, anal sex, hard fucking and being teased. NYC area. Box 291.

NYC REFUGEE MOVES SOUTH

Attractive, fat lesbian seeks new friends to show her the ropes in Miami/Ft. Lauderdale area. Into art, politics, talking dirty and most p.i. sex and leather. No fat phobics, smokers, or heavy drugs. Box 292.

ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

You must believe I am Mistress,/Don't let guilt get in your way./You must believe I am Mistress,/Come take my hand and obey. I am single, 36, 118 lbs, attractive, fun, and knowledgeable. Limits respected and expanded. All answered. Out-of-towners welcome. Love. Box 265.

ILLINOIS/INDIANA AREA

Passive butch seeks agressive butch. A woman who doesn't feel intimidated or insecure about loving and fucking another butch. I am 5'7", 250+ lbs, black, 27, into light B/D, ass-fucking, spanking. I love being overpowered. Must be mature, 27+, any race. No fat phobics. Letter and phone. Box 264.

I WANT YOU

34, 5'1", brown/green, overweight but cute. No commitments, just good old-fashioned body exhausting sex. Let me fuck you over and over again. You'll be glad you did. Can travel, but limited to the Carolinas. No drugs. Box 263.

HOT, HORNY, WILLING & ABLE

Attractive, intelligent, lusty, white femme, 26, seeks romance and outrageous sex. I'm slim, athletic, educated and completely uninhibited. Turned on by photos, toys, oral, anal, S/M, three-ways (sometimes Bi). Chicago-based, but travel often. Send letter and explicit sexy photo. All answered same day. Satisfaction guaranteed. Box 262.

NEW YORK TO BOSTON

Me: Loving femme bottom likes women of power, women who do not shave. I like lots of hair. I get off on erotic books, photos, letters. Please write or send photo. Box 261.

BEAUTIFUL YOUNG SLUT

Gorgeous blonde, blue-eyed, very bi, 24, with boyfriend, seeks fun-loving woman for passionate sex. Would like to explore all kinds of new and different fantasies, including light to heavy S/M, top or bottom. Either one erotic night or an ongoing friendship desired. San Francisco. Box 260.

LARGE MUSCULAR FRAME

That's me! Very attractive, 32 years young, 5'9", 180 lbs, no fat, usually top. Mild S/M bondage, very experienced butch. I am more than willing to fulfill all your sexual fantasies, wants and needs. All attractive femmes will reply. If you're pretty, that means you! Send photo, please. Buffalo, New York City, Rochester area. Box 259.

MANHATTAN MISTRESS

Seeks a wealthy lesbian for passionate pleasures and social cultural affairs. I want to meet you for a satisfying, creative relationship. Box 247.

COLUMBUS, OHIO

Cute, sexy, sober, sensuous, funny, imaginative bottom who looks sensational in black leather collar and wrist restraints, seeks firm, loving, affectionate, hot, playful tops/bottoms/both for correspondence, possible meeting. Interested in sharing fantasies, experiences, fun 'n' games. Box 240.

LIPSTICK, PERFUME & HI-HEELS

Luscious, painfully beautiful, fashionable, well-groomed, smart, sleek, submissive lesbian femme, desires raw lust and rich enjoyment of unlimited Dom/Sub pleasures including bondage, discipline, showers, and erotic dress with imaginative, forceful domination from attractive, daringly seductive GWF. I can travel or host. NYC Metro area. Sincere letter and photo a must. Box 242.

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

Attractive, 5'5", 115, 21 yr. old, brown eyes, light brown hair. Seeks a woman who wants a lot of sex and love. Who likes to have fun and act like a kid sometimes. Someone who is both strong and sweet. I know you're out there, please write soon. Box 246.

YOUNG AND SWEET

Attractive, inexperienced femme with prizewinning physique seeks attractive, muscular (the more the better) dyke with class to add excitement to my boring straight life. If you qualify, write and send photo. You'll be glad you did. Box 248.

TWO TERRORIZING WOMEN

Searching for a person to be a willing victim to our creative sadism. NYC area. Box 251.

HUNGRY FOR PLEASURE

I am 32 yrs. old, intelligent, sensuous, and enjoy classical entertainment, fine restaurants, theater. Seek to be another lesbians' mistress for open-minded, sensuous sex and fun-filled evenings in Manhattan, N.Y. Only interested in local meeting. Box 241.

BLOND FEMME, S/M NEOPHYTE

24, 5'2", 118 lbs., blond, blue eyes, attractive, intelligent, nymph. Occasional model. Enjoy wearing lacy play clothes, fantasies, fetishes, flirting, acting sexy, toys, being overpowered, yet mutual sex. Turn ons: leather, motorcycles, cute androgynous butches, dark hair, muscles, power, strength, knowledge, seductions, willingness to experiment. Turn-offs: femmes, baby-dykes, narrow minds, presumptuousness, lack of intelligence, bis. Fairly new to S/M scene. Desire to learn more, very curious. Initially looking to correspond with others. Box 227.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Large, motorcycle, beer-drinking dyke. I'm 27, rough, aggressive and passionate. Into hot, wet sex, B/D, leather and cuddling. Seeks submissive femme diversion who can handle being number two (the bike's always first). Letter, phone, photo (returned). Box 224.

RELATIONSHIP WANTED

5'4", 200 lbs., partly paralyzed from waist down. Born-again Christian, ordained minister. Desire bare-bottom spankings, massages and cuddling. Will give some to you. Phone/tapes/mail/visit. You decide. Box 230.

KINK TIMES

Submissive, young, black, female, very slave-like, seeks females, any race or age, submissive or dominant. For interesting get-together. Box 239.

LOVING IN LAS VEGAS

Older, chubby, feminine bottom wants sincere, older, secure but sensitive butch who still believes in romance as well as sex. Caring, sharing relationship desired. All answered. CA, AZ or UT visitors welcome. Box 229.

WITCHES AND PAGAN WOMYN

Lesbian witch seeking correspondence with other goddess worshipers to share information and enlightenment. New to witchcraft and resources are limited. Interested in exploring positive aspects of goddess worship, please no satanists. Will answer all requests. Box 232.

INTELLIGENT, ATTRACTIVE

Mid-30's Black lesbian feline fancier seeks similar for mutual sex--oral and penetration. Lose yourself in my opulent bosoms. Some pain increases the pleasure. No fat phobics, junkies or alcoholics. Letter of intent, photo, phone. Box 237.

NOTHING BOUGHT OR SOLD

Just hot sexy fun....Bi and straight women for fantasy sharing....All ages....Photo (or cassette) explicit please. Box 180.

WET & WILD IN WASH., D.C.

GWF, 25, 5'4," attractive, intelligent, sensual, articulate, lusty, and amorous, very intense interested in other half erotic penpals. Titilated by: tenderness, touching, teasing, talking (esp. during!) erotic tension. Very romantic, many fantasies. Energy, imagination are musts. (No S & M) Write me. Your photo gets mine. Box 269.

NON-MONOGAMOUS IN SEATTLE

Late-20s black powerlifter, into theater, books, walking in the rain, ferry boat rides. Old fashioned girl when it comes to sex but like a little spice occasionally. Seeking women with similar interests and into non-monogamy. No hard core S & M. If you wouldn't call yourself butch or femme, write me. Box 274.

SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER?

Lesbian couple seeks same for fun and frolic in L.A. We have five days to see and do it all. Museums, Hollywood, bars, restaurants. Help us experience L.A. the gay way. Box 273.

WET IN BOSTON

Attractive lesbian, mid 30s, top/bottom, loves torrid sex. Enjoy sensual B & D (dominant or submissive). Interests include dildos, toys, enemas, exams. Travel midwest, west coast extensively. Want to meet, correspond with similar minded singles/couples. Frank letter, photo gets same. Box 271.

FRIEND OR LOVER

GWF, 22, seeks responsive feminine women for fun & games. Incurable romantic. San Francisco area. Playful, fun.... Box 272.

PHOENIX AREA

Cute, heavy, inexperienced butch, 23, seeks shapely, tender, sweet, young (18-30) thing for serious loving. I have much fun and love to offer the Right Person. If you like a big "teddy bear" of a woman, then now's your chance. Box 275.

ABSOLUTE PLEASURE

This cute, sexy butch top knows what you want. You're deliciously femme, dangerously attractive, and submissive. I'll drive you to the heights of ecstasy. You'll beg for more of what my strong, muscular body, tirelessly skillful fingers, and hot tongue can provide. If you can dream it, I can do it. No diseases or drugs. Photo appreciated. Box 270.

HOW TO ANSWER A PERSONAL AD

Write your reply to the woman you're interested in. Seal it in an envelope, with your return address in the top left-hand corner, and her Drawer number in the *bottom left-hand corner.* Then apply a first-class stamp on the right, in the usual place. (If you don't stamp it, we won't send it). Now fold this envelope and put it in *another* envelope, which you will address to *On Our Backs- Personals*, POB 421916, San Francisco, Ca. 94142. When we receive your reply, we will take out the inside envelope and address it to the woman's real name and address. Then we will post it in the mail the next day. By following each of these steps to the detail, you will ensure your privacy, and get the speediest delivery.

AKRON, OHIO

32-year-old Virgo Queen looking for her crown of thorns. Beautiful, fem, outgoing, travels to surrounding states, NY & Chicago for business. My pleasures are fisting, slapping, B/D and erotic events. Simplistic beauty, savage strength and a good fit needed. Hurry! I ache for you. Box 276.

COUPLE OF COUNTRY DYKES

From Maryland, traveling to California for music festival late August want to meet other dykes going. Write. Maybe we'll see you there. Box 278.

HAPPY FIRST ANNIVERSARY

To my Southern Sweetheart in Washington, D.C. Here's to keeping those sugar walls hot and wet for years to come. From your Valentine and her fist. Box 279.

ADVERTISE FOR SEX?

Not me. Just looking to meet Bay Area women with some of the following interests: comedy, theatre, music, radio, performance art, sex. Ooops. I guess I'm human. I'm also 34, powerful, creative, womanly, and I hate this bullshit. Let's have a few laughs over it. And talk art. Then we'll have sex. Box 280.

BUTCH-FEM WANTS FEM

21, sexy, shapely, muscular and beautiful college student desires a woman. Do you like to wear lipstick, miniskirts or the like? Are you stunningly attractive, hip, stable and love sex? Write to me. New York, CT area. Photo appreciated. All ages and races please. Box 281.

TRAVELING LESBIAN COUPLE

Seeks homes where we and cats stay night or more this summer. Leaving Oklahoma in May, headed east. Definte stops: TX, LA, GA, NC, MA, but all options open. Will pay. Want to meet wimmin all over. Write with offer before May 15. Box 283.

SEATTLE - OLYMPIA AREA

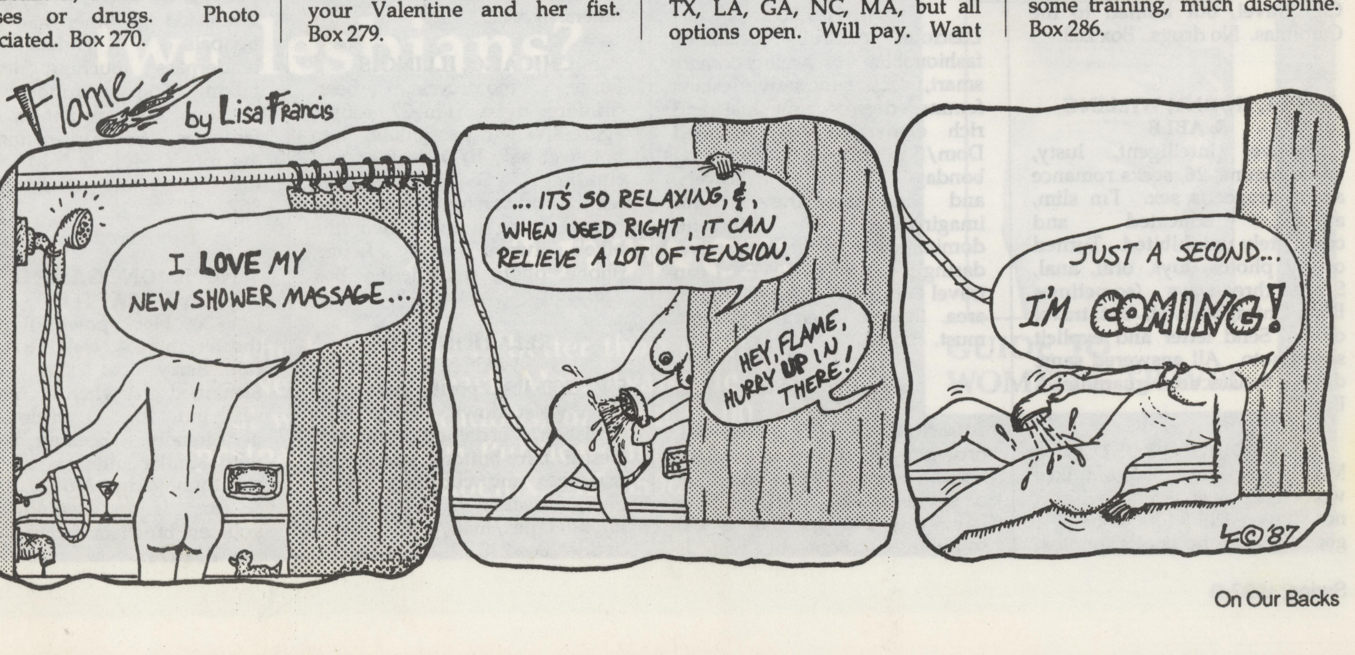
GWF, attractive, sophisticated with an edge, seeks hot sex, light romance, conversation and other night time novelties. Are you 20-35, androgynous - butch, willing to engage in passionate pleasures, abandonment? No slaves to drugs or alcohol need respond. Photo, letter or tape desired. Box 284.

NEW ENGLAND RESIDENTS AND VISTORS

Model will send photos or cum to you in person. I have house on island and can give one or two lesbians my version of bed and breakfast. You can eat or I can eat or we all can eat. What a way to start a day. I am young and have great legs, ass and opulent bosoms; can be top or bottom, can entertain one or more. Love letters, photos and most of all hearing of first experiences of lesbian love. Please write and we can correspond if you are not in New England. I can escort visitors, give great massages, baths and like to serve all wimmin. I will model by mail or phone. Please contact me; I am willing to try anything. You will love what you see. Box 285.

WESTERN MASS.

Top seeks to trade S/M bottom in exchange for quality leather garments and paraphernalia. (Negotiable.) Bottom is particularly fond of bondage, flagellation, fucking. Needs some training, much discipline. Box 286.


Flame
by Lisa Francis
I LOVE MY NEW SHOWER MASSAGE...
...IT'S SO RELAXING, &, WHEN USED RIGHT, IT CAN RELIEVE A LOT OF TENSION.
HEY, FLAME, HURRY UP IN THERE!
JUST A SECOND... I'M COMING!
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She wanted her kiss.

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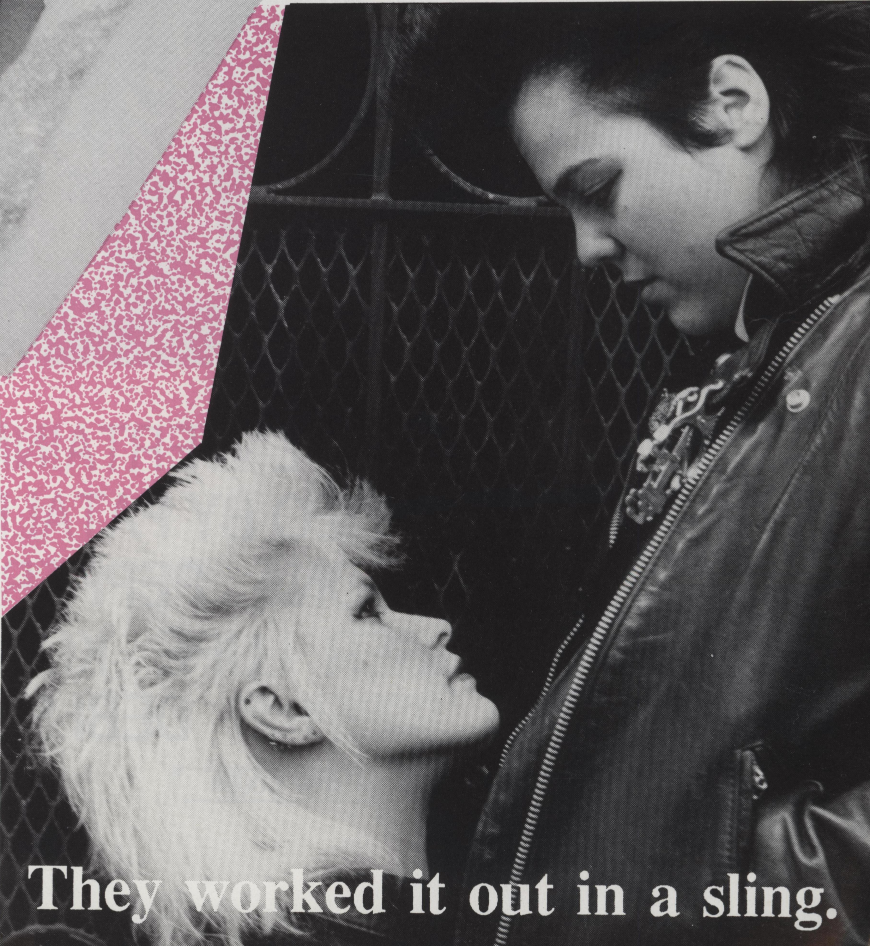
She wanted her fist.
They worked it out in a sling.

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